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THE KEEPER OF BIC LIGHT HOUSE,

A CANADIAN STORY OF TO-DAY.

BY
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THE KEEPER OF BIC LIGHT HOUSE,

A CANADIAN STORY OF TO-DAY.

CHAPTER I.

" In creeping curves of yellow foam,
Up shallow sands the waters slide,
And warmly blow what whispers roam,
From isle to isle the lulled tide "

Up creek and horn the smooth wave swells,
And falls asleep; or inland flowing,
Twinkles among the silver shells,
From sluice to sluice of shallow wells.

Lord Lytton.

It was a sultry afternoon towards the end of September, a haze hung o'er the blue Laurentian hills and half enveloped the little village of Bic, which to day seemed all asleep and deserted. Yesterday the last contingent of summer visitors had departed to their homes in Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, or the United States, as the case might be, and no longer shouts of merry laughter resounded through the one quaint old-fashioned street; no longer gay parties drove in rambling boy-

carts and springless buck-boards, for long days of enjoyment to the fragrant pine-woods, or more distant salmon river. For that year, at any rate, there would be no more excursions, and no more bountiful harvests of dollars would be reaped from the rich English or the richer American. Their beneficent influence was withdrawn for nine months at any rate, and the people of the village would now settle down to their quiet lives for the winter.

The afternoon was oppressive, and the old dames at their door-steps nodded sleepily over their knitting, scarcely raising their heads as the curé passed by, murmuring a hasty benediction, on his way to administer the last rites of the church to a dying parishioner. The silence was as of midnight, and the very waves of the great river seemed to be lapping in over a velvet shore, so noiseless was their motion. But suddenly, breaking the silence, and making the old women start from their slumbers, there came from the garden of a little cottage back from the road, the sound of a fresh young voice singing the old French Canadian melody

“Alouette, gentille Alouette,
Alouette je te plumerai,
Je te plumerai la tête, et la tête,
Alouette je te plumerai.”

The voice was a clear high soprano and seemed to

ring out from the garden as if the singer was filled with an ecstasy which must find expression and an outlet, an ecstasy, coming from the mere fact of living, of being conscious of the exquisite pleasure of breathing under yonder blue canopy of heaven, of taking part in the glorious plan of the universe like one of the sons of God, who, in the early days of the world's history, shouted for joy because they found the beautiful creation good.

To hear that fresh young voice made one long to peer over the low whitewashed fence into the garden of Madame Lafleur. A pretty little garden it was, with tall stalks of pink and white holly-hocks, great brazen-faced sunflowers, patches of bright scarlet geraniums, golden marigolds and asters of every size and color.

Stooping down over a geranium bed, weeding out an ubiquitous sunflower, which would persist in mingling with its aristocratic neighbours, was the singer, her song hushed for a moment in the performance of more important duties. Julie Lafleur was of that peculiar type of beauty, the more attractive because of its rarity, called by those initiated in such matters, a dark blonde. Though it must be confessed the name sounds paradoxical, it well describes the personality of Julie. Her hair was very fair, her eyes a deep greyish blue, that color which varies with every change of atmosphere, with

every passing emotion, her skin was tanned a healthy brown tint and the girl presented a picture of the most robust health. In the freedom of her gait, in the graceful carriage of her head, one could see at once that she had attained the most perfect ease of deportment, not by the artificial means of drawing-room training, or fashionable dancing masters, but by the unaided assistance of that grand old teacher, Dame Nature, who deals her favors with no miserly hand to those who are content to follow her wise counsels.

How Julie Lafleur came by her good looks often puzzled those who only knew her mother, a French Canadian woman of the most ordinary type, possessing a strong tendency to *embonpoint*, who certainly even in her young days could never have had the bearing and well-bred air, which were her daughter's chief charms. But several of the old gossips about the place remembered her father, and said that the girl inherited her good looks from him. He had not been seen in Bic for more than nineteen years, and few, but the very old residents had any recollections of him, a fair young Englishman who had come to this quiet village for the fishing, and who had, during one short summer, made desperate love to the Mayor's then pretty daughter and had, to the surprise of most people, married her. Desperate love, even under the most favorable circumstances, is apt

to grow cold and, after a few months of matrimony, young Herbert Flower discovered that he had made a tremendous mistake, in burdening himself for life with this half-educated French Canadian girl, and he would have given much to have freed himself from the self-imposed yoke.

By imperceptible degrees he grew weary of Bic and the simple primitive life of the good unsophisticated people there, and a great longing came over him to return to England and to his own people. But his wife, ah ! there was the trouble ! He could not take her with him, he could not introduce this girl to his relations, nor did he wish to do so. All he wanted was to be free, for he was tired of the Mayor's daughter and utterly indifferent as to what became of her. A man may hate a woman, and in time learn to love her, for in hatred interest is a foregone conclusion, but indifference is fatal and not to be overcome, withering all that goes to make love.

Worst of all, Julie saw that her husband was weary of the life he led, of his whole environment, and what was more serious, weary of her, and she took the matter bitterly to heart. Though only a poor habitant, she was at least conscious of what she pleased to call her own inferiority to this man, who had honored her by making her his wife. In her simple way she was a de-

votee, and sought the help of Mother Church, that consoler of heavy laden souls and weary hearts of every creed and nation. Patience ! patience ! so counselled her confessor, patience, forsooth ! to this poor suffering heart, which had staked its all on one venture, gained a few months of what was to her an all sufficient paradise, and a life-time of regret.

As time went on, Herbert Flower, the young Englishman made more and more frequent visits to Quebec, where a regiment of English soldiers was stationed for the winter, and each time he went, he remained longer than the last. Once, after he had been gone for more than six weeks, his wife grew very anxious about him and eagerly awaited his return. Instead, however, a letter was one evening handed to her by a pilot from an out going steamer, which had stopped for a moment at Father Point. The letter was cruelly short and to the point, and informed Madame Lafleur in a few words that her husband had suddenly been called to England by the illness of his father, that he was overcome with grief at the thought of leaving Julie without even a word of farewell, but that his ship was sailing at once and that he would return to her by the first steamer in the spring. He enclosed a cheque for two hundred dollars, and said that a like amount would be sent her every quarter, and finally, if she had any important news to

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communicate to him, she was to write him under cover to his bankers, Messrs. Robertson & Smith, Lombard Street, London.

It is doubtful whether Madame Lafleur, as all the villagers called her, ever recovered from the shock this letter gave her. How much worse bad news is in a letter than conveyed by word of mouth ; it is so cruelly bare, the facts are so meagre, no softening inflection of the voice, no unbending of the angry will is possible, the inevitable words once written stand out inexorably black and decided, on the clear white page. This letter was the death-blow to Julie's hopes. She was his wife; a more sophisticated woman, knowing the ways of the world, would have found comfort in that fact ; she did not. She had lost him ; the fault, she argued, must be hers and she racked her poor brain to discover how she could have displeased him, in what one point she could have failed in her duty towards him. No, she would not take his money she decided in the first moments of her bitter grief and disappointment, he might keep it, she had enough for her simple wants and living was very cheap at Bic.

Of course M. le curé was told all, he was the confessor of Madame and fortunately, besides being a priest worthy of his vocation, was a man of common sense and somewhat more of a man of the world than most of his parishioners.

With the easy going philosophy of a man of the world, M. Gagnon did not allow his equanimity to be ruffled by any event, however unforeseen, and to tell the truth, he was not very much astonished at what had occurred, for, before the wedding he had ventured to remonstrate with the girl's father at the inequality of the marriage, and to predict unhappiness in the future. But M. le Maire, though listening politely to his spiritual adviser's warnings, paid no heed to them, and thought from a worldly point of view, which is the point of view most fathers take in such a case, that the connection was a most desirable one for his daughter. Unfortunately the sequel proved that M. le curé had been wiser than M. le Maire, and when poor Julie came to him for counsel, the advice he gave her was sage and practical.

"It was all very well talking about broken hearts and blighted hopes," he said, "but in spite of being afflicted with these sad things, one cannot die, one must go on living, only cowards die, but to live it is necessary to eat, and to buy the wherewithal to eat, one must have money."

"No, Madame," continued Monsieur Gagnon, "no, you must not return the money, you must keep it. Herbert Lafleur was your husband, he was very wicked to desert you." •

"He will be back in the spring" protested Madame feebly.

"Well, perhaps" replied the curé doubtfully "so much the better, but in the meantime you must draw this money. And your marriage certificate, you have it? Give it to me, I will keep it safe for you."

The poor woman, acquiesced in all the curé suggested, indeed it was her nature to acquiesce, and at this time she was too much overcome to argue, and gladly left all her arrangements to the priest, who managed everything well and invested what money she did not require immediately, in order that in case of emergencies she might have something to fall back upon.

The autumn and winter passed, spring came, but the Englishman did not, summer navigation opened, the great river was enlivened by in coming steamers from the old world, and as each passed by Bic, Julie anxiously hoped that her husband was on board, he, who was in spite of his desertion, to her, still the chiefest among men.

But her keenest anguish had abated, and consolation had come to her in another way to cheer her desolate lot, and when the icy rivers of the north began to break their fetters, and the tender green maple buds burst into new-born beauty, her child was laid in her arms, and at the touch of its tiny helpless fingers the dead load of

despondency was lifted, and hope eternal blossomed, where despair had reigned throughout the winter days.

The years passed uneventfully in that quiet part of the world, little change came to the people, and less to the place, except, that it had become a popular summer resort for visitors from all parts of Canada and the United States, who came to this quiet spot to recruit, far from the busy duties of nineteenth century civilization. Twenty years afterwards the river St. Lawrence wore the self-same aspect as when Herbert Flower used to paddle in his bark canoe far out into its deep waters, at least, it had only two phases, one, cold, grey and stormy, the other blue, smiling, steadfast.

But though little change could be perceived in the older generation, much was seen in the child, who had come to be a solace to Julie Lafleur's aching heart, and to fill it with that most unselfish love our fallen nature can know.

This child had grown to the stature of a fair maiden, tall, slender, graceful as the lilies in her mother's garden, and in the care and tenderness Madame Lafleur expended on her daughter, she forgot at times the faithless lover of her youth, and she learned to accept, with the philosophy middle age brings, the grief, that in her early days she had deemed a cross greater than she could bear.

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ver, that, after all, dining is the most important of
vents ; the illusions of life are past, most things are
ommonplace, there are no deep valleys of shadows,
ere are no high mountains of elation, overclouded
ith rose-colored dreams. In those early days we
ffered more, we enjoyed more, we loved more
assionately, we hated more intensely, we were all
xtremes ; but what would not most of us give for
nt one hour of that halcyon time when the frame was
rong, the heart was brave ; when failures, more nume-
ous than successes, had not weakened the sinewy arm,
or discouraged the doughty spirit.

On the afternoon my story opens, Madame Lafleur
ad, after twelve o'clock dinner, fallen fast asleep, and
er daughter, Julie, had sallied forth to weed the
arden.

This garden was Julie's delight. Ever since she could
remember anything, she remembered digging and plant-
g there, and all the happiest memories of her young
fe were associated with it. Here it was, that after
er first communion, the curé had given her his bless-
g ; here it was that Pierre —

"Good day, Julie," said a voice from the road; Ah! I see you are busy, as usual."

"Good day, M. le curé," said the girl. "Yes, I am always busy, these weeds grow so fast—much faster than the flowers."

"Ah! my child, your garden is like the world—the bad people get on much faster than the good. I have just come from the death-bed of that mysterious old man who lives down at the point."

"What, old Wilson; is he dead?"

"Yes; I must go now, but tell your mother I shall come this evening to see her after vespers, and you shall hear this strange man's history. It is very curious. Au revoir, my child."

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CHAPTER II.

“There lieth a wreck on the dismal shore
Of cold and pitiless Labrador,
Where, under the moon, upon mounts of frost,
Full many a mariner's bones are tossed ;
Yon shadowy bark hath been to that wreck,
And the dim, blue fire that lights her deck
Doth play on as pale and livid a crew
As ever yet drank the churchyard dew.
To Deadman's isle, in the eye of the blast,
To Deadman's isle she speeds her fast :
By skeleton shapes her sails are furled,
And the hand that steers is not of this world.”

Moore.

THREE hours later, a cheerful little party consisting of four persons, was gathered together in Madame Latleur's brightly-lighted kitchen. In this part of the world it was considered much more sociable to sit in the kitchen, for the parlor was seldom used except on occasions of state, such as marriages or funerals, and was, as in most French-Canadian homes of the ordinary class, a cold and cheerless apartment.

The fire burned away merrily, and the evening being somewhat chill, all were gathered closely round it, listening to M. Gagnon, who seemed anxious to impart what he knew of his curious parishioner, Wilson.

Young Pierre Grenier, who some months before had been betrothed to Julie Lafleur, listened with an absorbing interest to every word which fell from the lips of the curé. He was a tall, broad-shouldered young man, with a well-knit, muscular frame, and an intelligent face, his forehead and the upper part of his countenance being decidedly prepossessing from the frankness and honesty they portrayed. His dark, thick hair hung in masses over his brow, and gave him rather a Spanish or Italian appearance. One always thought of the woods when looking at Pierre Grenier, for he spent most of his time out of doors, and would have served as an excellent model for one of those stalwart *coureurs de bois* of the early period of New France.

"What a strange man Wilson was," said Pierre, to the priest. "He seemed to care for no one but himself."

"Ah! wait till you hear his story, then you will not wonder so much at his reserve and selfishness," replied M. Gagnon. Yesterday I was with him all afternoon and far into the night, and he talked incessantly. He could not sleep, and a sort of false strength seemed to

be vouchsafed to to him for that night, because all to-day he was very weak and could scarcely raise his head, and this afternoon passed quietly away."

Madame Lafleur crossed herself devoutly, and inwardly resolved that she would say a prayer that night for the repose of the poor sinner's soul.

"It appears," M. Gagnon went on, "that for many years Wilson had lived on the coast of Labrador. I know that part of the country well, for when I was first ordained, the Bishop sent me on a mission there. The people live in little hamlets far removed from each other, and it was my duty to drive in a sleigh with a team of dogs, and visit each settlement in turn, read the prayers of the church over the dead, baptize the children, and perform the marriage ceremony. But to return to Wilson, I know his tale must be true, for no one could feign such an intimate knowledge of that strange land, and it is a well-authenticated fact that for years the deep and tortuous inlets and great bays on the Labrador coast, with good anchorage, afforded a safe haven of refuge to rovers of the seas.

Driven from more frequented waters, they repaired to this northern shore to mend their shattered vessels. Here, during the short summer, they recovered from their wounds; here, too, they secreted their booty. Here, perhaps, the long sought treasure of Captain

Kidd may be hidden. Who can tell what secrets are held forever in the recesses of its wave-beaten and rock-bound shores? Perhaps the reason old Wilson was willing to confide in me was because I knew something of the country and could enter into, and appreciate his stories about its wonders, and would know that he did not exaggerate.

Here M. le curé paused for a moment to take breath, and to partake of some of Madame Lafleur's sweet cider, made from the rosy cheeked apples which grew in such abundance in her garden. In the meantime Pierre Grenier and Julie were growing very impatient for the story to continue, and did not see why M. le curé found it necessary to make such a long preamble before coming to the point, but they, with that native politeness which seems inborn in the French of these districts, were far too courteous to express their sentiments. At length, having disposed of the cider, M. Gagnon went on :

"Towards the month of June, 1820, this man Wilson (may Heaven grant peace to his sinful soul) settled on the coast of Canadian Labrador, and alone, and unaided, followed the rough and precarious calling of a fisherman. At the close of each season he visited Newfoundland to dispose of his catch to the English traders, and to replenish his stock of provisions and return to his lonely home to pass the long and dreary Labrador winter. He

told me that for five years he led this life, till at length he grew weary of his loneliness. After having, by economy and thrift, amassed a few hundred pounds, a great longing came o'er him to see old Scotland, the land of his birth, once more.

"Accordingly he crossed the Atlantic in a schooner, and, during a round of visits to his Scotch friends, he met a young girl whom he persuaded to leave home and kindred and share with him the perils of Labrador. Fitting out a small vessel, he set sail for America with his young bride, and a crew of hardy settlers and their families. It seems, from his subsequent history, that some demon of restlessness had at this time seized on the formerly steady young fisherman, and he induced the more active and daring spirits of the little colony to join him in a new project. One October day he placed his effects on board his schooner and quietly slipped out of the harbor, determining to lead a life of piracy. All his old habits of thrift and industry appear to have left him, his natural affections seem to have grown cold, for with most heartless cruelty he basely deserted his wife and young child. Poor woman, a stranger in a strange land, she died broken-hearted, and when, after a year of plunder, Wilson returned, all that was left to remind him of those he should have cherished and protected, was a lonely grave by the shores of the Gulf.

On the coast there is now a small settlement, which I know, and where I have often held services; it is called Mutton Bay, or Meccatina Harbor. About a mile to the east of this settlement is a deep inlet, called "L'Anse aux Morts," or Bay of the Dead. It was so named because of a small burying-ground which lies on its shore. This bay is screened alike from the fury of the sea and the observation of passing vessels, by a small island, which is so situated that it is easily mistaken for the mainland. Under the rugged and frowning cliffs which overhang the Bay of the Dead Wilson and his companions landed. Securely sheltered, they perfected their plans for a life of piracy and bloodshed, and, in truth, it would be difficult to imagine a spot better fitted for such a conclave.

The course of vessels then taken on their way from Europe to Quebec was through the Straits of Belle Isle, close to the northern shore of the St. Lawrence and just outside the island behind which Wilson and his crew decided to lie in hiding. At that time a packet was sent out annually by the British Government with the pay of the forces stationed in Canada on board. Wilson knew this only too well, and was on the watch for this vessel. Unsuspicious of danger, she approached the island, when Wilson's schooner darted out from its hiding place and swooped down upon her. She fell an

easy prey. Wilson confessed to me that they butchered her unfortunate captain and crew, removed the treasure, and then scuttled the ship, leaving no trace of the foul deed. At Quebec everyone was awaiting the overdue ship, but at last hope died out and it was supposed that she had succumbed to the fury of the Atlantic. The following year another packet was sent out, which shared the fate of her predecessor.

The loss of two vessels within such a short time aroused suspicion. A third was sent and with her a man-of-war. All went well until she approached the Bay of the Dead, when the man-of-war, having fallen far astern, the pirate schooner darted out, quickly captured the packet, secured the treasure and murdered all the crew with one exception. This was a negro Wilson wished to keep for a servant. Hoping to propitiate his captor, this man told the pirate that a man-of-war was close behind them, and this news so alarmed the captain that he beat a precipitate retreat to the island. That night another dread crime was added to the long list already committed by the wretched man, Fearing discovery and holding with the adage that dead men tell no tales, he changed his mind about the negro. But, first of all, he resolved to bury his treasure, and under cover of a blinding storm, while the thunder reverberated over those old Laurentian hills,

and the lightning cleft the thick, black clouds, he collected all his ill-gotten gains into five small casks. With the help of the negro he placed these in as many holes dug in the old burying-ground of the Bay of the Dead, two casks on each side of a central grave, which he left open. The negro questioned him about this empty grave in trembling tones, fearful of the treacherous designs of the pirate, but was promptly told to continue his work and hold his tongue. The captive had finished his task and turned his back for a moment to throw on a grave a last shovelfull of sand, when Wilson suddenly sprang upon him and plunged a knife into his heart. As the life blood slowly ebbed away, and before the body had time to grow stiff and cold, he twisted the limp form of his victim round the central cask, his old Scottish superstitious nature coming to the surface and impelling him to believe that the wraith of the negro would keep guard over the treasure. The central grave he completed alone and placed a stone at the head of each of the five.

At dawn Wilson's sentinels saw the man-of-war sailing through the western passage into their retreat, and they quickly escaped in their schooner through the eastern outlet. Wildly, again, that night raged the storm, fiercely the winds blew and lashed the waves to fury with resistless force, making them strike the pirate ship and throwing her upon a sunken reef.

Shriek after shriek arose from her crew; wild supplications rent the midnight air as the despairing men sought to be reconciled to the God, whose laws they had violated. But the God of our fathers is a God of vengeance as well as a God of mercy, and, though the wicked may flourish for a time, the day of retribution will come, and all these wicked men, except their leader, were that night launched into eternity. It is a marvel to me how he escaped. Through the long night he clung to a broken mast, and when the morning dawned and the tide was low he managed to swim to shore, though numb with cold.

Of course, it was impossible for him to remain on the coast, for everyone knew him and he was cordially hated and feared, so he resolved to make his journey farther up the country and pitched on our village of Bic as his final dwelling place. You know the rest. Madame Lafleur, you remember when he came here ten years ago how we all thought what a strange being he was and judged him harmless and a little crazed. We were surprised when he could afford to buy that house at the point from the seigneur, and little dreamed that with the remains of his treasure he could almost buy the whole of our village."

The curé stopped, and, pouring out another glass of cider, cooled his throat, which was hot and dry from speaking so long.

"What a wonderful tale," said Julie. "M. le curé, I am glad we did not know that such a monster lived near us, till he was dead."

"You need not have feared, my child, I hardly think he would have harmed anyone of late years. His strength seemed to have left him and his body was racked with rheumatism, from which he suffered ever since the cold autumn night he spent on the wreck off the coast of Labrador."

"Well, his treasure did not do him much good," said Madame Lafleur.

"No, it did not."

"What has he done with it?" asked Pierre Grenier, who had hitherto kept silence.

"After his escape from the wreck," said M. Gagnon, "he found his way back to the Bay of the Dead, dug up all the graves but the central one (he could not bear to look on the body of his victim), and took all the treasure, which was chiefly in silver and sovereigns, with him."

"But where is it now?" demanded Madame Lafleur.

"Some of it he spent to support himself, but the remainder, which, I think, must amount to a considerable sum, he stored away in a great wooden chest, which never left his bed-side; this he has left to the church, in his last moments becoming penitent and wishing me to say masses for the repose of his soul."

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"Why, M. le curé, you will be able to build a wing to the church now," said Julie, knowing this to be a long cherished project of M. Gagnon.

"Perhaps, my child—we shall see—perhaps the gold, which has been the cause of so much crime, will be at last consecrated to a good purpose."

"And that old man was a pirate?" said Madame Lafleur, musingly. "Well, I always thought there was something strange about him. He was very unneighbourly, and a heretic, for he never came to mass during all the years he has been at Bic, and I know of no one who has entered his house except Jean Pinsonneault."

"Yes, they were great friends," put in Julie. "I wonder why. Jean, you may be sure had some object in view; he is a great schemer."

"My child, said the curé, you must not speak ill of your neighbors; Jean is a bright, clever youth, and has ambitions, that is natural, but I do not think you should call him scheming."

Julie was silent, and did not reply to the curé's rebuke.

"But was Wilson a heretic?" asked Pierre Grenier.

"For many years he had no religion, feared neither God nor man; but, during the last few weeks, I think a better spirit came over him, and I trust my humble ministrations have not been in vain. As a penitent sin-

ner, I administered to him the last rites of the church, and just as the sun was shedding its parting rays through the little window of his room, Wilson's soul left its earthly frame and went to be judged before a higher tribunal than ours."

All the good people crossed themselves devoutly at the solemn words, and M. le curé rose to go.

"Pierre, are you coming now? We can walk home together," he said, turning to the young man.

Pierre bade a much shorter good-bye than usual to Julie, and with M. Gagnon left the house.

It was a dark, starless night, still and cloudy; no lights could be seen anywhere, save in the far distance the revolving lamp of the lighthouse of Bic, that welcome guide to mariners coming up the great gulf.

The two men walked some distance in silence, for the priest was tired, and Pierre was thinking of Julie. Suddenly the former clutched the pocket of his long black soutane, and said, in a distressed and perplexed tone,

"Ah, Pierre, how forgetful I am. I have left my spectacles on the mantelpiece in old Wilson's cottage. They are the only ones I have, and I must take them with me early to-morrow to the parish of St. Anaclet, where I am to meet the Bishop. Would you be kind enough to run back to the house on the point; see,

here is the key ; you are younger than I, and it is not very far."

Pierre hesitated just for one moment, for to tell the truth, in spite of his fearless nature, M. le curé's request had staggered him.

To go to that lonely point, to the desolate, uninhabited house where lay the dead form of the notorious robber, side by side with his ill-gotten gains, that was a journey which the bravest might refuse to undertake. But he delayed only for an instant, and in much less time than it takes to tell, his fears vanished ; indeed, fear and he had long been strangers ; his healthy outdoor life had driven away any timidity which might have been latent in his nature.

"Yes, M. le curé, of course I will go ; I shall only be too glad to be of service to you," and he started off immediately at a brisk pace.

The point was half a mile further on, and jutted out far into the river. Wilson's house, a small, whitewashed cottage, two stories high, was situated on the extreme edge of the point, within three or four feet of the water, and the front door faced the river, from which at this time, a strong breeze was blowing.

Perhaps of all the aggravating things in a world full enough of trials, the most aggravating is to endeavor to discover a key-hole in the dark. Certainly Pierre found

it so ; match after match he lighted, and scarcely was the flame of each kindled, than the breeze from the river extinguished it. At length, however, success crowned his efforts, and he found the key-hole, placed the key therein, and opened the door, which yielded to his pushing with a weird, creaking sound, as if in protest at the late intruder.

On entering, he found himself in a small, dark hall, and with the light of another match, he saw that there was a door opening on either side. Which was the dead man's room ? Well, he would try the one on the right hand. This was wrong, however, and opening the door he saw that it was empty, save for a few pieces of lumber and two or three chairs, but to his great delight he also saw some ends of tallow candle, which he seized on with thankfulness, and was about to light one, when, from the hall without he heard a sound as of stealthy footsteps. A cold perspiration broke out on his forehead, his hand trembled, he could not move ; tramp, tramp, went the steps slowly, muffled and soft, but none the less terrifying. Ah ! they were coming near the door, and imagination had quickly conjured up the vision of the ghastly sight of the dead pirate's ghost rising to wreak vengeance on the invader of his home.

But imagination was at fault, for the footsteps passed

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by the door, and the sound of their muffled tread died away in the distance at the end of the hall.

Pierre started up and listened for a moment, almost doubting the evidence of his senses. Who but himself could be in this lonely house at midnight? It must be fancy, but no! the footsteps had been real enough in their muffled thud, thud, on the creaking wooden floor; they could not be the product of his own brain. Could they be the footsteps of the dead man, who, by the agency of the evil powers he had served so well during his lifetime, was enabled to rise again in the gloomy hours of the night and gloat over his hidden gold? No, he must not give way to vain suppositions like these, and he braced every nerve to cross the hall and open the door on the opposite side of the hall, when he immediately saw that he was in the right apartment at last.

The tallow candle flickered in an annoying manner, its grease dripping down on his bare hand in great hot drops, its flame burning up for a moment brightly, enabling him to see distinctly his environment. It was a wretched, cheerless room in which he found himself, and, even had the noon-day sun been streaming in at the little window, it would scarce have relieved its dreariness. There was an old-fashioned fire-place, with a roughly hewn mantel board above, and in the grate were

the charred and blackened remains of the fire M. le curé had lighted for the sick man. On the narrow trestle bed lay the form of Wilson, covered with a white sheet, which outlined distinctly every curve of the inanimate clay, and on the breast was placed a roughly hewn wooden crucifix, which M. Gagnon had laid there that afternoon.

Pierre looked anxiously around, almost forgetting the errand on which he had come, and the story he had heard that night came back vividly to his mind with a new meaning. Ah! yes, there in the corner was the chest around which centred such tales of exciting adventure. He must examine it before he left the cottage, for he was perfectly certain he would never enter the house again.

The chest was placed quite close to the bed, where it had always been during the lifetime of its owner, who never let it out of his sight. It was an old fashioned oaken box, about three feet square, and was riveted together with iron bands. There were engraved on these bands on the lid some mysterious letters, and Pierre stared fascinated, knelt down to examine them. He was startled anew by a sepulchral voice, which seemed to come from behind him, saying in slow distinct, monotonous tones, "Death, death, death to him who touches the hidden treasure." He looked

behind him ; nothing was there save the black darkness of the cheerless room. He glanced at the bed where the dead man lay still, cold and silent. Again the voice repeated, this time less distinctly, and as if dying away amid the shadows, the words, " Death, death, death to him." Pierre waited to hear no more ; he must get away from that horrible house ; his candle fell from his trembling hand, and was extinguished in its fall. Through the door, out into the passage he groped his way, fearful of meeting with the touch of a clammy hand or again hearing the horrible words of an uncanny ghostly visitant. Forgotten were the curé's spectacles, and in his haste and terror he did not perceive a dark form brush past him in the hall, nor hear the mocking laugh which followed his retreating footsteps.

CHAPTER III.

"O now forever farewell the tranquil mind!
Farewell content!"

Shakespeare.

O earth so full of dreary noises!
O men with wailing in your voices!
O delved gold, the wailers heap
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth his beloved sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap
More softly than the dew is shed
Or cloud is floated overhead
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

E. B. Browning.

'**A**H, Julië, good-morning; have you seen M. le curé to-day? I have been to his house and he is not there," said Jean Pinsonneault overtaking Julie Lafleur on her way from market and offering to carry her basket for her.

"No, I have not seen him, because he is not here," replied Julie. "He told us last night that he was going to St. Anaclet this morning and he will be there for some days. Thank you, I can carry my basket myself, it is not very heavy. Good-morning M. Pinsonneault."

"Will you not ask me to come in to your house? You are not very polite to me."

"No, not to-day. We are very busy. It is baking day and the house is all upset," said the girl, abruptly.

"Good-bye, then, Julie. I shall come again when it is not baking day, but then I suppose if it is not baking day it will be washing or scrubbing day. *Au revoir.*"

"Never mind, Mdle. Lafleur," he muttered as he walked off, "some day you will repent in dust and ashes your treatment of me."

Julie Lafleur had had, before the advent of Pierre Grenier, many admirers; as it was but natural that such a pretty and attractive girl should, and amongst the most devoted was Jean Pinsonneault, on whom her mother looked with favorable eyes. Jean was rich, as riches are counted in that part of the world, he was steady going, hardworking and neither smoked nor drank, and his father was by far the most prosperous man in the village.

Julie said he was sly and untruthful, but these were

minor vices in the eyes of her mother, and perhaps if the handsome young blacksmith from Quebec, had not appeared on the scene at this juncture, she might have been persuaded to take Jean for better or worse. But fate had another destiny in store for her.

Pierre Grenier had come from Quebec four months before, highly recommended by his former employer, to take charge of the blacksmith's shop at Bic. Here his frank good nature and pleasing personality, made him very popular and, ever since he had been in the village, he had conducted himself in a quiet and eminently praiseworthy manner.

True, he had fallen head over ears in love with the acknowledged belle of the village, but there was nothing very extraordinary or damaging in that fact, except that his success in winning Julie Lafleur had made him several enemies amongst his defeated rivals, the most bitter of whom was Jean Pinsonneault. But this did not trouble his peace of mind much, for the course of his love, notwithstanding proverbial utterances, had run very smoothly, and the wedding day was fixed for the end of October.

The afternoon following Pierre's ignominious retreat from the dwelling of old Wilson, he was at his usual place at the forge hammering away lustily, and at the same time talking to two or three of his friends, who

had strolled up to discuss the news. Perhaps in the whole world there is no such hot bed of gossip to be found, as in a small French Canadian village; everyone takes the liveliest interest in his or her neighbours doings, and visiting at the various houses generally goes on with great energy all afternoon during those seasons of the year when work is slack.

"So old Wilson is dead," remarked one man. They say he left some money, I wonder who will get it. Do you know Pierre?"

"I know nothing about old Wilson," said the blacksmith, so shortly that the others turned and looked at him in surprise."

"Oh! you know nothing about old Wilson. I'll answer for it that you know more about him than anyone else," said the sneering voice of Jean Pinsonneault at his elbow.

"What do you mean? said Pierre turning from the forge and facing him angrily."

"Only this, that you were seen last night, or rather early this morning, coming from the house on the point."

"Well, what if I were? What of that?"

"You see, my friends" said Jean, addressing the little knot of idlers gathered round the forge. "You see he admits to having been at the point last night, I wonder if he will admit the rest."

Pierre stared at the man in amazement. What did he mean? The rest, what more was there to admit?

"Ah! see," Jean went on in his smooth sneering tone, he is pretending to be innocent, he doesn't know. Well my fine friend, where is the chest my father's boat-man saw you carry off from Wilson's house? I am an executor of the dead man's estate and I want to know."

"I know of no chest, at least——."

"Well what do you know?"

"The chest was never touched by me. It is there still."

"It is not there. See here, Jacques, "calling to an old fisherman, who stood near," the chest is gone from its place, is it not?"

"Yes M., it is gone," he replied.

"And now tell these gentlemen who you saw come out of Wilson's cottage this morning."

The old man looked at Pierre, hesitated a moment, and then replied.

"As I was coming back from the beach early this morning, it was scarcely daylight, but I was examining my nets before the tide came in, I saw that man coming out of Wilson's house walking very slowly, because he was weighted down with a great box."

"It is not true," exclaimed Pierre angrily. "It is not true, I will admit that I was at the dead man's house

last night, but it was not to steal. It was to get M le curé's spectacles, which he had left on the mantel piece the day before, and I did not leave the house in the morning, it was at midnight."

"A likely story indeed," sneered Jean Pinsonneault. I don't believe it."

"You don't believe it? Who minds whether you believe it or not, and who made you my accuser?" said Pierre, facing him, an ominous and angry light in his eyes which it would have been well if Jean had taken note of in time.

"I am your accuser because I am the heir to the dead man's property; he left it to me in his will and I am not going to be defrauded of my rights by you, Pierre Grenier, an interloper who has already been too kindly treated in Bic. Now, my friends," turning to the crowd, "there is no doubt of his guilt; will you help me to arrest him? He will escape if we let him go now," and Jean started forward to clutch Pierre's arm.

"Take care," shouted one of the men in the crowd, who saw the passion in the blacksmith's face, till this moment restrained. "Take care, Jean Pinsonneault."

But the warning came too late, for with a sudden and swift gesture, Pierre caught up a huge hammer, which lay beside the forge, and with one mighty blow struck his accuser and felled him to the earth. He had not

reckoned on the strength of that blow, and anger had lent to his strong arm a greater power than it had heretofore possessed. His intention had been, at the most, to stun the man, but the hammer had but too surely done its work and his enemy lay dead at his feet.

The gaping crowd stood awe-stricken, gazing stupidly at the man lying before them, his sightless eyes staring up to the calm, blue sky, the awful majesty of death fastening for all time the mocking smile on his lips.

Without attempting to detain him, they let Pierre pass, and he, still blind with passion, scarce realizing that he had killed a fellow-being, walked hurriedly to the river shore and from a little sheltered bay drew out his bark canoe and launched it into the deep, blue, glistening waters of the St. Lawrence.

To be alone, that was his only wish. His thoughts were all confused, his brain in a whirl.

It was the most perfect time in the day, just when the fierce heat of the afternoon sun had abated and before it sought the other side of the world for twelve long hours. A soft grey haze wrapped land and water, the waves were rippling gently, a faint breeze ruffled the broad bosom of the river, four or five white-winged yachts were idly floating by, their sails outlined against the sky. The scent of new mown hay came wafted across the waters, and all nature was harmonious and at peace.

The man, so at variance with his surroundings, directed his canoe to an island which lies at the entrance to the harbor. For the last two hundred years this has been called Massacre Island, because of the dreadful scene which took place there when the Red men of the north made fierce war on each other. On this island there is a huge cavern, which obscures from view those who are within, owing to the large boulders of rock and earth which lie at its entrance. On one of their hunting expeditions, two hundred Mic-Mac Indians encamped in the old days here, and on the good beach of the island securely fastened their canoes.

In the cave were placed the squaws and papooses, while without the red skin warriors slept in apparent safety. But their deadly enemies, the Iroquois, that fierce and remorseless tribe, were ever on the alert, and during the still night, when the Mic-Mac encampment slept peacefully, the enemy crept through the under-wood of the island, and lurking behind some tall pine trees, the Iroquois braves, awaited the time to destroy the foe. With fiendish ingenuity, they silently surrounded the cavern, piled fagots at its entrance and set fire to them. Then, with wild, despairing cries, the Mic Macs endeavored to escape, but those who got free from the fire fell a prey to the scalping knife, and out of two hundred only five remained to tell the tale of the massacre on the island.

But to return to Pierre Grenier. On reaching the island he threw himself under the shadow of the pine trees, and feeling completely worn out by the events of the last twenty-four hours, lay down on the grass and was soon fast asleep. For hours he slept and dreamed of his life in Quebec, a life of honest toil in that quaint, old world city, with its fortresses, its citadel, its convents and churches, its many remnants of departed military glory. He dreamed of the home of his childhood, where all who knew him loved and respected him, and the sweetest dreams he was to have for many a weary year came to him that afternoon.

When he awoke it was dark, the sun had set, the air was chill. A sound of bells floated towards the island. It was the Angelus from the village church. From force of long habit Pierre rose, removed his hat, made the sign of the cross and muttered the Hail Mary. A deep silence followed the ringing of the Angelus, and with it, in a wave of returning consciousness, the memory of the day's events came to him.

He was a murderer, ah! Yes, he shuddered at the thought—a murderer and an outcast. Where should he go? What could he do? He, Pierre Grenier, was a criminal; he, once so respected by his fellow-men. And he would be taken, worst of all, he would be put in prison; they would shut him up. Ah! he could not

bear that, he would go mad; he could not live if he were shut up even for a day. He, child of nature, loved the river and the woods; prized above all things his liberty to come and go as he wished. No, he would go far across the sea, far from all who knew him. But Julie—he must see her once again, must tell her that he did not mean to kill that man who had lied about his visit to the point.

It was dusk, now. He could safely venture to cross to Bic, so he again launched his bark and paddled through the dark waters. Fastening the canoe securely on the beach, he walked up the narrow path, and soon found himself outside Madame Lafleur's little garden.

CHAPTER IV.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.

Matthew Arnold.

MADAME Lafleur's cottage was well hidden from the road by the luxuriantly foliated apple trees which surrounded it, so that Pierre felt certain he could approach without being perceived by any one passing on the main road. The night was clear, the moon had not yet risen, but there were many bright stars twinkling over head, and shining brilliantly in the clear Canadian atmosphere. The difficulty was to make Julie aware of his proximity without alarming her suddenly, or allowing his presence to be discovered by any one else. There! he could see shining like a beacon through the shade of the orchard, the light in the kitchen win-

dow ; the blind was not drawn down, and, ah ! now he could see Julie herself moving about busily amongst the dishes which she had finished washing and was putting away in the old-fashioned cupboard fastened to the wall on one side of the room. And there was Madame Lafleur fast asleep in her great red and black striped rocking chair. He knew of old that nothing short of an earthquake could awaken her from her after supper nap. Julie had nearly finished her task—now was his opportunity, for come what might, he must speak to her to-night ; he must endeavor to clear himself in her eyes, at least of guilt of the hasty and terrible act he had committed, for at the sight of her sweet, pure face, a great rush of love and tenderness came over him, and a wild longing seized him to go to her, confess his sins, and be assured of her forgiveness.

He tapped on the window-pane, and at the unexpected sound, the girl started and grew pale, nearly dropping the tea-cup she held. But she recovered quickly, for country nerves are not easily shaken, and came to the window, opened it, and saw Grenier.

" You, Pierre ? " she cried. " Are you mad to come here ? Don't you know they are after you ? The whole village has turned out in pursuit."

" I don't care, Julie, they will not know I am here ; I have come to say good-bye ; I shall not be taken ; I

have my canoe, and can go to the other side of the river, where no one knows me. I can stay among the Indians for a time. But Julie, I could not go without seeing you first."

"But, my poor Pierre, you cannot talk here, my mother will hear you and some one may come into the house at any moment. Go back to the orchard, the trees are thick there, and no one can see you from the road. Now, quick, go; I will follow you."

He had but regained his hiding place a moment when she came to him, and now he could see that her face was very white, and her eyes red and swollen with tears."

"Oh, Pierre," she said, "I have so longed to see you. I did not believe them when they told me. I have been hoping to see you, and to hear from your own lips that you did not kill Jean Pinsonneault. I told them it was not true, and that I did not believe their wicked tales, and I sent them from the house. I would not listen."

"Julie," he said slowly, as if pronouncing his own death-warrant, "Julie, it is but too true, they were right. Friends, ah! I suppose were the first to tell you, they always are; bah! it is their way—they love to gloat over their friends' misfortunes. Yes, shudder, turn away. I knew you would hate me, Julie."

"I do not hate you, Pierre," she whispered.

"You will, though. Yes, I did kill Pinsonneault, though heaven knows that I did not intend it. He attacked me before a dozen people, and said that I stole Wilson's treasure, and he bribed old Jacques to tell lies of me. I was wild, I could not bear his sneering words, and his taunts raised up all the devil within me. I was reckless, Julie, I hated the man, I hate him yet, but I swear to you, that mad with anger as I was, I had no intention of even striking him until he grasped my arm. Julie, I was wild with rage; I could not measure the force of my blow, and then he dropped down dead. It was terrible to see him lying there, cold and still, his white face looking up at me, and seeming to say, 'now you have done your worst'; it haunts me now, Julie, and it will to the end of my life."

He shuddered, and broke down completely, for the strain of the day was telling on him at last, and as he sobbed bitterly, his whole frame was convulsed and trembling.

"My dear one," said the girl, placing her cool hand on his forehead, "my dear one, do not give way like this. Pierre, I do not hate you; what a poor thing my love would be, if it could change like that. You must believe once and for always, Pierre, that I love you with my whole heart and soul, and even had you intention-

ally done this dreadful thing, I could not change to you."

He looked up gratefully at her ; for the first time for many an hour a ray of hope dawned on his horizon. She went on,—

"But you must not be taken though, you must escape. Listen, I have suddenly thought of a plan. Pierre, to-night, I know, for Guillaume the pilot told me, there is a steamer expected from Quebec. It will stop at Father Point to let off the Quebec pilot, at about four o'clock this morning. Now, you have your canoe?"

"Yes."

"Well, you must start almost at once, paddle down the stream and watch for the steamer. Wait, though, till the pilot boat gets off, then you will be able to slip on board in the darkness, for she will not put on full steam for a moment after the pilot goes, and then you can ask the Captain to take you across. It is a small ship, and there will be no difficulty."

"But, Julie, he will surely refuse ; I have no money here, and I cannot go back to my house."

"Stop, I have thought of all that. Wait a moment, I have a little money in my room, I saved it last year. You must take this, and it will pay your way cross the Atlantic. Once on the other side, you will

easily get work. You remember Jacques and Jean Lamontagne, who got carried over last year, when it was too stormy to let the pilots off. Well, they told me that they got good wages in Liverpool all winter. You are a better workman than they, and you will have no difficulty in getting work. Pierre, my dear one, it breaks my heart to have you go, but it is better than having you taken and shut up in prison. Now, wait here till I come back ; I shall not be a moment."

"Julie, I cannot take your savings. It is generous of you, but I can not rob you in this way."

"Pierre, what is the use of my money if I cannot help you. Wait, I shall not be long."

She was gone before he could reply, but the unhappy man felt cheered by her words and faith in him. While Julie loved and trusted him, there was still hope left in the wide world ; the touch of her cool hand on his heated brow had seemed to take away the raging fever of his brain, and the memory of her words fell like soothing balm on his anguished spirit.

"But, how long the girl was coming back, had anything happened to her ; how had she been detained ? Ah ! the moon was up now, he could see distinctly all over the garden, but through the thickly wooded orchard no flutter of Julie's white gown was visible. Why did she not return ? Surely there was so little time that

they could spend together, that every moment was precious. He must venture out, he would risk it, there was no danger now, the village was all asleep, and not a soul had passed by on the road. Yes, he would venture once more to the kitchen window, and see what was detaining Julie. For one instant of time the moon shone out brightly, then it was overcast by a thick, dark cloud. Now was his chance, he stepped forward quickly, reached the window, and raised his arm to tap on the pane, when a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, and a gruff voice said,

"Pierre Grenier, I arrest you in the name of the Queen, for the murder of Jean Pinsonneault. You must come with me."

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CHAPTER V.

"Friendship is seldom truly tried but in extremes. To find friends when we have no need of them, and to want them when we have, are both alike easy and common."—*Feltham*.

"MY dear Captain Smythe, I am going to have my own way this time. I am tired of everything, and I'm determined to have a change; everything wearies me completely, and I'm satiated with dinner-parties, teas and gossip, and all the pomps and vanities. I'm going to devote myself to good works, for a change."

"You will tire of them pretty soon, too. I know of nothing so fatiguing as philanthropy."

"Do you speak from experience?"

"Well, ah! no, not exactly, but each of my eight sisters, in turn, tried that sort of thing, carrying provisions to old women, in baskets, over muddy roads, knitting stockings, and reading to them, and all that, but each of them got tired of it except the one who

married the curate of the parish, and she will have to ply the philanthropic role all the rest of her life," replied Captain Smythe, in his slow, drawling tones.

"Oh, well," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, "my philanthropy is more interesting than that, besides, I think I have a righteous cause, and in spite of what you all say, I am going to interest myself in this girl, and exert all the little influence I possess in helping her."

"I'm sure I wish you every success, though I'm extremely doubtful about it. You see, I —, I don't believe in women, especially women like you, mixing themselves up in such matters, and people are saying that you do it just for the sake of notoriety. No, I don't like it."

"That is because you are a little behind the age, you know; though of course there is some excuse for you. You are an Englishman, and don't understand that our opinions go for much more on this side of the Atlantic than on yours."

"That may be so, but I don't want you to be involved in a losing game, for losing it is sure to be, and I am perfectly sure that Mr. Fitz-Robinson will not approve of it."

"There you are mistaken again, for he does, and he will," replied pretty little Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, triumphantly, "he approves of everything I do, and what is

more, he says he will help me in every way he can, so there you see you are wrong again."

"(. . . suppose it is all right in that case, and I have nothing more to say about your new freak, but I am very tired of hearing about these people, and prisons and disagreeable matters in general. Let us talk about something else. Are you going to the opening of Parliament on Thursday week?"

"Yes," answered the lady, "I always put in an appearance at that function, though I must say it is rather a bore to array one's self in evening dress in the middle of the day; still, you know it is the correct thing for all the ministers' wives to go."

"I suppose there will be any amount of gaiety here this winter," went on the Englishman.

"Oh, a fair amount, I suppose, but you, at any rate, as *aide de camp* to His Excellency, will have your hands full, and I hope you will bear your heavy responsibilities better than your predecessor did. The mistakes he made were something appalling. Whenever I think of them, even in church, I find myself going into fits of laughter—internal, of course."

"Why, what did he do?"

"What did he not do? That question would be more to the point. His sins were chiefly those of omission. When he first arrived on the scene, he abused

Canada and everything Canadian. Then, you know, he had the sending out of the invitations, and he used to get them wofully mixed up. Once there was a grand dinner-party given by the Governor-General, and this youth sent out the cards—amongst them one to poor Mr. Beverley, and his wife, who has been dead for five years. Mr. B. wrote and explained, but next time the invitations came for his wife all the same, and the afflicted widower's harrowed feelings could bear the strain no longer, and he went himself to the *aide de camp* and protested. Apologies were of course made, and when the official next sent in his official corrected list of guests, he wrote to enlighten his secretary: 'Mrs. Beverley still dead.' That was what he considered a good joke, but we did not see it in the same light."

Captain Smythe laughed.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, "I could go on for hours telling you of his silly mistakes, and I assure you when he returned to his native country, we were all delighted to speed the parting guest. We Canadians, you will find, are very independent, and resent any slights such as this young sprig of nobility seemed to enjoy putting upon us. I warn you in time, so that your career may be a more brilliant and successful one."

The above conversation took place in Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's pretty house in Ottawa. This lady was the

wife of the Hon. Peter Fitz-Robinson, one of the Canadian statesmen. A good many people generally dropped in on Wednesday afternoons, on which day Mrs. Fitz-Robinson was always at home, for this was one of the show houses in the capital, and its mistress was a charming, if somewhat unconventional, hostess. It was early yet in the afternoon, and Captain Smythe, the new *aide de camp* to the Governor-General, was the only visitor. To tell the truth, this young man had found time hang very heavily on his hands since his arrival from England a few weeks before, and spent a great part of every day in the Honorable Peter's house, and when she had time to attend to him, he found the honorable Peter's wife a very puzzling, albeit interesting, character.

She was so refreshingly original, she did not bow down and worship at his shrine, as did most of the women he knew in England, for he was a professional beauty in his way and very conscious of the fact, and he had an extremely captivating manner of singing doleful songs with a tenor voice and a woe-begone air, which had proved disastrous to the peace of mind of many a fair and foolish British maiden.

Though Mrs. Fitz-Robinson considered that the latest importation needed much snubbing, she still allowed him to wile away his spare time in her house,

which was from cellar to garret a thing of beauty, for both the minister and his wife spent much time and money on its embellishment.

The drawing room in which the hostess sat this afternoon was a very dainty apartment, its windows looking out on the high cliffs of the Ottawa River, now frozen hard and white. Even on this mid-winter day, however, the windows were garlanded with Spanish jessamine, growing in great Dresden boxes, and the walls and ceilings were covered with soft silken material of palest pink, like the first flush of early dawn, interwoven with threads of silver. A chandelier of pink Venetian glass formed to represent clusters of convolvuli, hung from the ceiling, and all the sofas, arm chairs and rocking chairs, for which Mrs. Fitz-Robinson had a great fancy, were upholstered in pale pink velvet, embroidered with silver in quaint fantastic patterns. The floor was covered with great white bear rugs, the gifts of one of her husband's sporting friends. Nowhere in the room was any wood work visible, even the frames of the long narrow mirrors were swathed in pink velvet, and in each corner and niche of the windows were placed pink marble statues by Couston. Under the chandelier stood a round console table draped with cloth of silver of the Fifteenth Century, and on it stood a great pot of pink camellias in full bloom.

That all might be in keeping with the roseate hues of her surroundings, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson had arrayed herself in a picturesque tea-gown of softly falling pink silken stuff, lavishly ornamented with lace, yellow from age, and, in truth, she looked a very charming picture presiding at her tea-table, covered with its dainty egg-shell China cups and saucers and sparkling service of silver and crystal. Looking at her, one could hardly blame the Hon. Peter for thinking everything she did was perfect, although she occasionally did very unconventional things, and had an enthusiastic warm-hearted way of taking up people in misfortune, which caused her to be hardly judged by the good Pharisees, whose pulses never quickened at the sight of distress, and whose holy eyes were cast heavenwards in saintly expostulation at many of the little lady's odd freaks. But she did not care and went on her way smilingly, always making new resolutions and as often breaking them. Everything and everybody all her life-long had combined to spoil her ; to begin with she was an only daughter, and then when she was but nineteen Mr. Fitz-Robinson, a man many years her senior, had married her, and had allowed her to do just as she pleased ever afterwards, so that the many good points in her character had never been brought out nor sternly chiselled by adversity. In spite of all her

spoiling she was a very lovable little woman, very fond of enjoying the good things this life offered her in such abundance, but never callous to suffering, nor hardened by her prosperity, and with the younger members of the community in the Dominion Capital she was extremely popular.

Towards five o'clock her drawing room became crowded with people coming in on their way from the rink, to gossip and partake of tea and thin bread and butter. Bright-eyed maidens, with their cheeks glowing and rosy, after skating in the bracing wintry air, chatted gaily and discussed the probabilities of a gay season. In fact everything was fully talked over, from the latest English visitors at Government House to the frills on Lady K's new gown. The young people were trying hard to prevail upon Mrs. Fitz-Robinson to give her usual ball this winter, for she had declared that she was going to give up such frivolty.

"You know," said a tall, rosy cheeked girl, a true Canadian type, "you know it is my first winter out and I had counted on your ball to make my debut, but now you devote all your time to this French friend of yours. I am sure I am as worthy an object for your charity as she."

"I suppose after all I shall have to give in," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, sighing, "especially as we have

just received letters of introduction from friends in England, sent to us to-day by a Lord Camperdown. He must be in Ottawa. Do you know anything of him, Captain Smythe?"

"I? Yes, of course I do. He is a visitor at Government House."

"What, that pompous looking man I saw with the Government House people in town yesterday?" asked the girl, who was anxious to have the ball given. He looks as if he had swallowed a poker."

"Yes, that's the very man. He is going to be out here all winter; he has some land in the Northwest and has to look after it, but he will make Ottawa his headquarters," replied Captain Smythe, laughing."

"I'm sure by his appearance he will be a great acquisition to us," said the girl sarcastically.

"My dear," remarked an elderly lady, Mrs. Green by name, who had hitherto kept silence. "My dear, you must remember that he is a member of the British aristocracy. He's fifth Viscount Camperdown, you know."

"Well, what of that? I maintain that he is a very ridiculous individual, and I don't care whether he is a dozen Lords rolled into one; that would not alter my opinion in the least."

Mrs. Green looked shocked and said reprovingly in a

solemn tone as if she were delivering a funeral oration :
" My dear, you are very young. You have, I'm afraid, since you were in New York, imbibed some of those horrid Republican ideas, but as you grow wiser you will learn to reverence our beautiful aristocracy. Why, Lord Camperdown's ancestors came over with William the Conqueror.

" How do you know that ?" asked Miss King.

" How do I know it?" said Mrs. Green, looking round deprecatingly. " How do I know it? Why, have I not for years studied the peerage and followed the movements of these people wherever they went. When my grandfather was knighted by George the Fourth our family were intimately connected with all the aristocracy and we have kept up our connections ever since—why Lady Tweedledee writes to me every Christmas in her own beautiful hand writing, and the Marquis of Noacres always sends over a bunch of dried shamrocks on St. Patrick's Day, and"—

" For goodness sake stop that woman's reminiscences," whispered Mrs. Fitz-Robinson to Miss King. " Give her this tea, tell her to try my plum cake, anything, or we shall have anecdotes both of the whole upper ten thousand at home and abroad related to us."

Miss King obeyed, inquiring if the lady took sugar and cream in her tea.

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"Cream, please, my dear, no sugar ; nobody who is anybody takes sugar now-a-days. I like it, you know, but last time I took tea with the dear Countess of Langlois, she said in surprise, when I asked for sugar : 'My dear, it is very vulgar to take sugar, you must break yourself of this bad habit, now do for my sake.'"

"Very rude of the Countess, I am sure," said the girl. "Most probably she wanted to economize and told you that, but you needn't mind that here. Mrs. Fitz-Robinson will let you have as much as you want."

"No, never," said Mrs. Green, heroically : "Never will I break the sacred promise I gave my noble friend. To my dying day I will drink my tea unsweetened." Fearing more endless repetitions of the sayings of the nobility, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson hastily interrupted the loquacious lady, saying :

"I suppose, after all, the best way of entertaining this Lord Camperdown, will be to give a ball, for we must show him some civility. He is a great friend of Mr. Fitz-Robinson's cousins, in London, and they asked us to be kind to him."

"What, are you going already, Captain Smythe, and you, too, Mary ?"

"Yes," replied Miss King, "we dine early, you know, and my father is very punctual. Good-bye, Mr. Fitz-Robinson ; good-bye, Mrs. Green—now do take sugar

in your tea in future. I am sure Lady Tweedledee or the Countess would grant you absolution if you told her how very fond of it you are."

Very soon, all were gone, and the mistress of the house was left alone. She was one of those people who hated being alone, and now she glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece to see if there was time before dinner to call on her latest friend. It was only six o'clock, there was fully an hour and a half, for the much worked minister was usually detained till after seven. She rang the bell, and ordered her sleigh to be got ready at once, and hastily dressed herself in a long, fur cloak and cap.

"Drive to 107 Vittoria street," she said to the coachman. Twenty minutes later he pulled up at a poor-looking house, in one of the back streets of the city, and Mrs. Fitz-Robinson alighted, and inquired for Mdle. Lafleur.

"Yes," she is in, said the slipshod house-keeper who came to the door. "Will you go up to her room? It is at the top of the house."

Mrs. Fitz-Robinson ascended the shaky staircase and entered Julie's room, which had the appearance of being better than the rest of the cheerless house, for the girl had brightened it by covering the furniture with pretty, bright chintz and lace, and hung clean, white curtains at the window.

"Ah, madame," she said, rising from the table at which she had been writing: "Ah, madame, it is good of you to come to me. Take this chair it is the most comfortable in the room."

The girl had changed a great deal since we last saw her in Bic; she had lost her bright, careless expression, which had been her chief attraction there, but her face had gained a more matured, if chastened, beauty, and there was a pathetic appeal in her great, dark eyes. She was thinner, too, and the color in her cheeks was hardly so bright as when she weeded her garden in the bracing atmosphere of her native St. Lawrence, for city life and its conventional ways had oppressed her, but at the sight of her friend, her pale face lightened up, and her old animation, for the time, returned.

"Yes, madame," she said, "I think I have improved the room. It was very bare and cold, and it did not take long to cover these chairs—it reminds me of home."

"It is very pretty, Julie, but I can only stay with you a few moments. I have been wondering what had become of you. I have not seen you for more than a week. How have you been getting on?"

"Oh, just the same as ever, madame."

"And what news of Pierre?"

"He has been very ill lately, Madame. The prison

doctors fear that he will go into consumption. The confined life has been telling on him. I am very anxious."

"You must cheer up, Julie," people always exaggerate in letters, and things may not be as serious as they appear. You know, Julie, my husband takes quite an interest in you and Pierre, and he is almost sure that we shall get him released on the plea of extenuating circumstances. Now all depends on you, and you *must* be brave and cheer up. You look very white, and you need a change. Now, I am going to give a ball next week, and I want you to help me with the decorations. Will you come? Did you ever see a ball, Julie?"

"No, madame, never. I have seen them dance on Saturday evenings, at Bic, in the school-room, but they did not call that a ball."

"No, I should think not, said her friend, smiling. Well, you will see mine, and that will amuse you. By the way, have you heard from that nice priest, who is so kind to you?"

"Oh, yes, madame—see, here is a letter. It came by this morning's post."

"Read it, please."

The girl obeyed, and read M. Gagnon's letter, which ran as follows:—

"MY DEAR JULIE:

"I have just heard of the arrival in Ottawa of a man whom they call Lord Camperdown. I knew him long ago, and have many claims on his consideration. He is influential, and may be able to help you, as he is a guest of the Governor-General. If you cannot obtain an introduction to him in any other way, send him the enclosed note, and then he will not refuse to see you. We are still searching for the treasure, and I believe at last we have some clue to its discovery."

With every good wish,

Believe me,

Sincerely yours,

A. GAGNON,

Prêtre.

"That is a curious letter, remarked Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. What can M. Gagnon know about this Lord Camperdown? You will have no difficulty in getting an introduction to him, for I can manage that. But of course if the treasure is found, that will practically smooth matters for us, and make it more easy to obtain pardon for Pierre. A murder committed in a moment of anger, and a murder committed in order to silence the victim and conceal a theft, are two very different things. But you must keep up your courage, Julie, for I am certain all will yet be well. Now I must go. Don't forget to come on Thursday."

It was now three years since Pierre had been taken from Bic, and during these three years there had not been a day that Julie Lafleur had not thought of him,

and prayed for him before the altar of the little village church, for in these remote districts the rush of modern life and thought had not as yet induced that feverish restlessness, which is the bane of our nineteenth century life. There the good people in their primitive way were simple and natural, and lived their lives out in unruffled calm. They went to mass regularly, they believed firmly in all the saints, no problems of modern unbelief vexed their being or wrinkled their brows with vain imaginings and doubts. They were good, they were happy, they were kind hearted and unsophisticated, as are the French-Canadians on the shores of the great river, and they were, oh! blessed characteristic, content. And, as in their religion, so were they in their affections—constant. It never occurred to Julie, as it might have done to a town-bred maiden, that now her lover was unfortunate, there was no reason that she should be faithful to him. It is to be feared that Julie was far from being nineteenth century in her ideas, and she clung to his memory with a devotion touching as it was rare. But she could not idly fold her hands while he suffered, and she felt that she must act in some way, though at first her thoughts about the course she ought to take were very vague. M. Gagnon tried hard to change the current of her ideas, for he saw that she was becoming morbid and feared for her health.

"Julie," he said to her one day, "you must take heart. Suppose we all succumbed, as you do, to our individual sorrows, what a world this would be."

"M. le curé," she answered him, abruptly, "can you not let me go in peace? Do I trouble anyone? I do not cry aloud. I do not talk to you of Pierre Grenier, though Heaven alone knows that I think of him every hour of my life. Yes, M. Gagnon, I picture him toiling, toiling, day after day, week after week, year after year, in that prison. Pierre Grenier shut up within four walls for ever, think of it! He who loved the woods, who hated to be indoors! Oh, it makes me wild."

"My child you must be patient."

"Bah!" she said, disdainfully, "patient. You do not understand. You are good, of course. You are a priest, but I am human, and I tell you M. le curé that I would rather share that prison, terrible as it is, with Pierre Grenier, than live in a palace without him; yes, and more than that, I would not go to Heaven without him, but with him I should consider the place of punishment a happy spot."

M. le curé was deeply shocked at the girl's sudden outbreak, and replied reproachfully:

"My poor child. Is this all my teaching has done for you? My child, perhaps the good God saw that

you were setting up an idol in his place, and removed it from you?"

Julie took no notice of M. le curé's remark, and the good man decided that unless something could be done to divert her thoughts from one channel she would go out of her mind. But he was mistaken. This was the first and only time she had given way to her grief, and, after this one outburst, she never spoke again in this manner. Few knew of the long hours, when all the village was asleep, she spent before the high altar in the church, praying for the release of Pierre Grenier. An idea had been firmly taking root in her mind that she might become the instrument of his return to liberty, and this grew to be a sort of craze with her. She sold her poultry, eggs, and flowers (though her mother sometimes remonstrated at her denying herself little luxuries) and thus earned many a dollar, which she hoarded with a miser's care.

From Pierre directly she heard but little. He was sometimes permitted to write to her, but his letters were very short and had little news of himself in them. There was a despondent ring about them, like the song of a wild bird caged, and drooping and pining for the woods and rivers and clear bracing air of the Canadian forests. After he had been at the prison for three years, an outbreak occurred one day amongst the con-

victs and Pierre had been instrumental in quelling it, and was highly commended by the authorities for his courage. The newspapers gained possession of the story, as they do now-a-days, and it was exaggerated of course, but in Pierre's favor, and his whole past career was told afresh, thus rousing much sympathy in his behalf.

It was during the same summer that Julie made the acquaintance of a young American lady, who had come to Bic for July and August, and this lady had taken a great fancy to her, not only because of her history but because of a certain attractiveness about the girl herself. It was she who suggested that Julie might succeed better if she could be enabled to appeal herself, to the highest authorities in the land, and with that facility for undertaking new enterprises which belongs to her nation, the bright American said she was quite ready to accompany Julie to Ottawa if she would go. At that time it so happened that the wife of the Governor-General was a certain Royal Princess, equally famed for her benevolence and kindness of heart.

"And why shouldn't we appeal to her?" the American said.

"Well, you know," replied the curé, who happened to be present, "our high personages are rather difficult to approach, and I don't know whether the Princess would have any influence, supposing, even you did succeed in

obtaining an audience. You know we don't think so much of influence as you Republicans do," with mild sarcasm.

"Well, I don't care, we can only fail," the fair Republican retorted. "And if I were Julie, I would leave no stone unturned. Julie, when can you be ready to start? you see it will be better to go while Pierre's late achievement and courage are still fresh in the public mind."

"Oh! I can go any day you like," said Julie, for the first time in many a month, showing some sign of animation.

So it came to pass that one September day, Julie and her newly found friend set out for Ottawa, armed with a few letters of introduction from M. le curé.

Many had been the obstacles in their way. First of all, old Madame Lafleur strongly objected to her daughter undertaking the long journey, then the expense was more than Julie could afford, and M. le curé was inclined to throw cold water on the scheme.

But the American overcame these objections, and opened her own well-filled purse to Julie, and after a journey up the river by boat, and a short stay in Quebec, they arrived safely in the Dominion Capital.

But here new difficulties beset their path. Most of the influential people were out of town, it would be

some months before Parliament would open, and till then Julie could hardly hope to effect much.

At first the novelty of her surroundings amused and interested her, but as this wore off she found time hang very heavily on her hands and grew despondent. Her friend was called away suddenly by the illness of her mother in New York, and she was left alone in a little lodging in Ottawa. But before the American girl left, she discovered that she had an old school-fellow living in the town, who had married one of the ministers. They met by accident in the street, and the minister's wife, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, had become much interested in the French-Canadian girl's history, and in her enthusiastic manner was very kind to her after her American friend had gone home, and often had her at her house, and endeavored to make the weary months of waiting pass more quickly.

CHAPTER VI.

The flowers all are fading,
Their sweets are rifled now ;
And night sends forth her shading
Along the mountain brow ;
The bee hath ceased its winging
To flowers at early morn :
The birds have ceased their singing,
Sheaf'd is the golden corn ;
The harvest now is gathered,
Protected from the clime ;
The leaves are sere and wither'd
That late shone in their prime."

Ousely.

AS soon as his trial was over, Pierre Grenier had been taken to Montreal, and thence to the penitentiary of St. Vincent de Paul. A more dreary day than that on which he arrived at the prison, could scarcely be imagined. The rain, on this November afternoon, was pouring down in torrents, and the journey from Montreal to the French village where the penitentiary is situated, was prolonged for three hours, owing to an accident on the line. All this weary time the unhappy

man and his guards waited between Montreal and their destination, and a journey which is generally accomplished in an hour, occupied the whole afternoon.

At length they arrived at the station of St. Vincent de Paul, and here a carriage from the prison was awaiting them. The rain still poured down, and it was intensely cold at this unsheltered place. The ramshackle conveyance, hardly to be dignified by the name of carriage, was dragged along by a horse that seemed to have lost all his vitality, and the wheels continually stuck in the muddy ruts of the rough, uneven road, the driver and guards being obliged to descend from the carriage, and by main force push the great clumsy vehicle out of the slough of mud and water, which detained it.

During these frequent stoppages, Pierre had plenty of time to look around him, as he was not allowed to descend, and the prospect on which he gazed did not tend to enliven him. Isle Jesus, on which the prison is situated, is not an inviting spot at any time, and this afternoon it looked particularly dreary. In the distance lay the dark and narrow stream of the Rivière des Prairies, which runs past the island, and the prisoner could not help contrasting it with his last glimpse of his beloved St. Lawrence, as it lay blue, clear and shining in the bright October sunlight.

The village through which Pierre and his guards now passed, was like hundreds of other French-Canadian villages in the Province of Quebec, and there was nothing to characterize it as being the situation of a great penal colony, till they had driven by most of the dwelling houses in the principal straggling street. Then they came to a row of small houses, shaped like enlarged sentry boxes, and arranged in uniform regularity of uncompromising ugliness. These were the houses in which the out-door guards of the penitentiary lived.

At length the walls of the prison itself were reached. It was a large, grey limestone building, its desolate appearance enhanced by the iron bars across each window. On their arrival, Pierre Grenier was immediately conducted to the warden's room and ordered to change his clothes, and put on the penitentiary uniform, which consisted of thick, white cotton trousers, a coat, one half of which was reddish brown, the other yellow, and a cap of brown and yellow cloth, with the figures 278 marked on it.

"Pierre Grenier," said the warden, glancing sharply at him, "henceforth you have no name, you will be known as number 278."

The prisoner winced at this last humiliation added to the many he had already borne, and in truth there was something terrible in this effacement of his individu-

ality, this loss of the very name by which his fellow men had known him. Henceforward he was not a man, he was only a machine known as number 278.

During these wretched hours, the only comfort he had was the remembrance of M. Gagnon's last words to him, and the assurance of Julie's constancy and faith in him. At their last meeting, before he had been taken to Montreal, she had resolutely declared that she would devote her whole life and energy to obtain his release. He had smiled incredulously then, but to-night, in his dreary cell, he took comfort in the thought that at least two faithful souls would cherish his memory now that he was for ever cut off from the busy haunts of mankind.

He looked about his cell in a dazed manner; it seemed to him that this could not be himself, this was not Pierre Grenier, who all his free, happy life had come and gone as he would, controlled by no man. This, Pierre Grenier, in this narrow room, this miserable cell, twelve feet long and five broad—it could not be. At nine o'clock he heard the warder come to the door and lock it on the outside, and no light or sound came to him from without till five next morning. He might as well have been on a desert island for all that he could hear of those about him, and the first night he was shut in, he felt that he would go mad, all was so still, so

horribly silent. Well for him that his sentence was not one of solitary confinement, and that for part of the day at least he worked amidst his fellow-beings, for how true is that Italian proverb, which says that the solitary man is either an angel or a devil; how few natures there are which can fall back on their own resources, and dwell apart in contented loneliness.

At length Pierre fell asleep, and did not waken till the guard came at five o'clock, and bade him fall into line with the other convicts, to get his breakfast.

The kitchen of the penitentiary was a large, square room, fitted up with ranges and huge brass pots for cooking, everything being exquisitely neat and clean. The prisoners did not take their breakfast together, but were all ranged in a line, with their hands on each others' shoulders, and passed down the corridor outside the kitchen. Their food was given them through a window in the kitchen wall, and each carried it to his cell and ate it there. Throughout the institution the greatest order reigned, and everything was done with clockwork regularity. Of all the surprising things Pierre saw in the place, the marvellous contrivance for opening or locking the cells was the most astonishing. This was a large iron structure looking like a wheel without any outer rim, and by turning the spokes of it, the warden could open or shut every cell in a corridor

simultaneously, or each separately, at a moment's notice.

After breakfast, number 278 was taken into the chief officer's room. This official addressed him, saying :

"There is a vacancy now in the blacksmith's shop. Would you like to enter it ? We require every prisoner to work, but we allow a choice. As you have been a blacksmith, you might prefer to take up your old trade."

Number 278 replied hurriedly that he would rather work anywhere than in the blacksmith's shop, and was then told that if he wished he could learn carpentering, for there were several vacancies in that shop. He answered that he would be glad to learn this trade, and the guard conducted him through the court-yard and into another building which was approached by mounting a high flight of stone steps.

At the guard's knock the massive iron door was opened by a stern-faced warder, who saluted in military fashion, and whose appearance reminded one of that class of Gothic Frenchmen brought to light by the great revolution. This man opened an inner door and number 278 and his guard passed into the carpenter's shop. In this large room there were thirty convicts at work and the new arrival was consigned to the care of the foreman in order to learn his trade. And here day after day, month after month, he labored on ; the same

routine was always followed, and each new day was exactly like its predecessor.

As time wore on, Pierre became resigned to this monotonous existence, and he even enjoyed his work, so adaptive is human nature, but after the first year of this close confinement his health began to suffer and his friends would have scarcely recognized in the pale convict, the careless, happy blacksmith who had been wont to sing so cheerily over his forge at Bic.

Grenier was a favorite with the warders, who liked this prisoner, because he never complained, and did his allotted task diligently and well. He gave them no trouble and he never attempted to break away, as did many of the other convicts.

Only once, since his arrival at St. Vincent de Paul, had anything happened to break the dull monotony of his daily life. This was soon after the incarceration of a notorious burglar named McKenzie, who had already escaped from two other Canadian prisons. This man was very powerfully built and of great physical strength, and was continually giving the warders trouble, and it always took two or more to overmaster him when he broke out. Six weeks after McKenzie arrived he positively refused to do any more work or to obey any orders, and was consequently locked in the dungeon in the basement of the establishment. The

first evening he was imprisoned there he cut the mortar which surrounded one of the largest stones in the wall and by means of his great muscular power pushed it out into the passage and crept through the hole thus made. All was silent within the penitentiary, and with amazing coolness McKenzie arrayed himself in a guard's uniform, which he found hanging in the hall, and escaped out into the village.

His absence was not discovered till next morning, when three guards were immediately despatched to search the whole of Isle Jésus for him. There had not been time for him to wander very far, and they soon came upon and captured him near a swampy wood, on the Rivière des Prairies side of the island. It was a matter of some difficulty to take him, for he resisted to the utmost, knocking down one of the officers with a desperate blow, which completely stunned him. The other two men, after a protracted struggle, succeeded in getting the convict back to the prison, where, just as they entered the court yard, the other prisoners from the carpenter's shop were coming across to go to dinner.

Two of the guards were very pale, and worn out with their exertions, the third was completely incapacitated from the blow he had received, but McKenzie seemed to be little the worse from his exertions.

Pierre Grenier, as chance would have it, happened to be standing near the group which was passing in, and saw the burglar wrench himself away from the two guards, who held him on either side. Quick as lightning, McKenzie snatched a truncheon from the right hand guard and raised it to aim a tremendous blow at his head. Grenier saw the unexpected movement, and dashed forward, regardless of his own peril, and caught the uplifted arm. McKenzie turned on him fiercely. Grenier's strength was not by any means what it had been in the days of his freedom, and it would have fared badly with him had not a new relay of guards come up at that moment and soon overpowered McKenzie. The incident, insignificant as it appeared at the time, brought Pierre into favor with the authorities, and because of his brave and prompt action a few little privileges were granted him, which served to brighten his long days of captivity. The newspapers published a detailed account of the affair, and of course magnified its importance, and public opinion was largely influenced in his favor. Wisely indeed had Julie's shrewd American friend judged when she said that the time was opportune to pray for his release.

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CHAPTER VII.

"All assemblies of gaiety are brought together by motives of the same kind. The theatre is not filled with those that know or regard the skill of the actor, nor the ball-room by those who dance or attend the dancers. . . . Whatever diversion is costly, will be frequented by those who desire to be thought rich, and whatever has, by any accident, become fashionable, easily continues its reputation, because every one is ashamed of not partaking it."—*Johnson*.

MRS. Fitz-Robinson's annual ball was a feature of the season, and many a fair young damsel looked anxiously forward to making her first appearance at it with pleasing expectation, so that although the minister's wife had announced her intention of abandoning the pomps and vanities of the world, she could hardly allow herself to doom so many to disappointment. The eventful night had arrived at last, and every one who was any one, and a good many nobodies as well, were invited, consequently the rooms were crowded, and still sleigh after sleigh drove up to the door of the minister's

mansion, and deposited its load of eager maidens and stately dowagers.

Julie Lafleur had been in the house all afternoon, helping to decorate the rooms and assisting the busy hostess to add the finishing touches to the wreaths of roses and evergreens which were hung in garlands on the walls. When all was ready, the French girl retired into Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's boudoir, which had a little window, whence an excellent view of the ball-room was obtained. This boudoir, of course, was in keeping with the rest of the house, and was so daintily arranged that Julie paused, on entering it, for a moment in silent admiration. It was hung with pure white plush, embroidered with wreaths and bunches of violets, and all the chairs and tables were of white lacquered wood, with Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's favorite flower, the violet, artistically painted thereon.

Through a half open doorway she caught a glimpse of the lady's sleeping apartment, with its couch of lemon wood, shaped like a gondola, hung with sails of lemon-colored silk, instead of curtains. As in the case of the other rooms in this ideal house, the boudoir floor was covered with white bear rugs, and gems from the old masters hung on the walls.

By the time the French girl had fully investigated the art treasures of her benefactress's sanctum, the

ball was at its height, and strains of deliciously dreamy dance music fell upon her ear with soft, harmonious cadences; the whole scene was new to her, and consequently delightful. From the little window overlooking the ball-room, she could see bright faced girls floating by, enjoying to the full the enchantment of the hour, and there was Mrs. Fitz-Robinson herself, looking her best in her new Parisian gown, and not afar off the Hon. Peter, watching her movements with unaffected admiration.

To tell the truth, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson was more than a little bored, for although everything was going on well, and the ball was a decided success, she had to be very civil to the guest of the evening, Lord Camperdown, and she found it very difficult to entertain him.

It was indeed a thankless task, for his lordship was seldom known to make more than three consecutive remarks, and these were the short, ejaculatory sentences of "Ah!" "Yes!" and "Really!" Of course a clever elocutionist might put a world of meaning and expression into these words, but his lordship was not clever in any way, and Mrs. Fitz-Robinson did not find the constant reiteration amusing; in fact, it wearied and annoyed her beyond measure. Lord Camperdown was a decidedly handsome man, of the stolid English type, still in the prime of life; indeed, he did not look

over forty, but the peerage set him down as nearer half a century. His fair hair was scarcely touched with grey, and his complexion was pink and white as that of a girl in her teens. This man, his friends were wont to say, had a conscience clear as the noon-day sun—nothing ever ruffled him, and he was popular with most people, for he found life run much more smoothly without troubling to contradict or quarrel with any one, at any time. He had no strong opinions—religious, social or political—consequently he lived a very untroubled and calm existence in the busy world of London. He could not understand the ambitions of many of his contemporaries, who, though possessed of ample incomes, could yet take pleasure in working much harder than their own servants. He never felt a wish to be at one and part of the great organizations affecting national life to its very depths, nor to feel himself an integral part of the great forces which cause humanity to progress in its onward march. No, he was content to be a spectator of the great game, and his pulses never quickened, nor did his brain exhaust itself in working out problems which it could not hope to understand. Small wonder, then, was it, that at fifty, Lord Camperdown looked young and fresh, and that no wrinkles had marred the serenity of his calmly aristocratic brow.

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the beauties of the Dominion capital to his lordship, exhausted her small stock of jokes and most of her wit, in the vain endeavor to amuse this stolid guest. The conversation continued to be one-sided, and she wished sincerely that his lordship had remained at home.

"See," he said, making a despairing effort, "see that tall lady in crimson, she is one of our strong-minded women, and the last general who was here made a very good joke about her."

"Ah! yes, really?" remarked the guest of the evening.

"Yes, really," continued Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, "see, there is her husband—Mr. Brown—that meek, pale little man, you must see him to understand the point; every one knows that she rules him with a rod of iron. There was a big fancy ball given at Government House, last year, and Mrs. Brown looked magnificent in a helmet and coat of mail, as 'Britannia.' I did not see Mr. Brown at all in the crowd, and asked the general what character he represented."

"The waves, I suppose," he answered. "Clever, was n't it?"

Lord Camperdown smiled serenely. He never allowed his calm dignity to be ruffled by anything so boisterous as a laugh, no, laughing and weeping were for the vulgar herd; aristocracy did not permit the

indulgence of such emotional extremes. Surely there must be an invisible golden coronet on this man's head reminding him always of his dignity, and even in the democratic new world he was hedged about with a stand-off, "I am holier than thou" air, which impressed many people immensely and caused them to take him at his own estimation. But Mrs. Fitz-Robinson was never impressed by that kind of influence, and as the evening wore on this member of the peerage wearied her very considerably. He could or would not dance, but the duties of a hostess obliged her to see that he was entertained in a manner befitting his rank. Towards twelve o'clock she saw him standing alone again at one end of the long ball room, gazing with languid uninterested eyes at the merry dancers as they wheeled round in always varying evolutions. She must make another effort, and crossing the room to the corner where his lordship stood, said :—

"Lord Camperdown, I am afraid you find all this very tiresome. Would you like to see over the house? Everyone seems to be getting on very well and I can leave the dancing room now. It might amuse you to see our curiosities. You know both Mr. Fitz-Robinson and I take a great deal of trouble in arranging this old house."

"Ah ! Really—yes, I should—ah, like to see it very

much," replied his lordship, wishing that he could go home and not be bothered any more."

"Then come with me. I will take you to the picture gallery. We have just added two or three particularly good paintings to the collection," she said leading the way.

Passing through the hall they encountered the Hon. Peter, who was discussing the political situation with two or three ministerial friends, and who paused to ask where his wife was taking Lord Camperdown.

"To show him the house and the picture gallery, she replied.

"That's right my dear, and, by the way, don't forget the new picture by Jules Breton. It arrived just before dinner. I forgot to tell you. There wasn't time to hang it in the gallery, and I told the man to leave it in your boudoir. Be sure to let Lord Camperdown see it. It is a splendid bit of color and reminds me of some scenes in French Canada. That is why I bought it."

"Ah! my husband is very patriotic," remarked Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, as she mounted the broad oaken staircase, lighted with dark crimson lamps which threw a rosy radiance on all around. "He is intensely patriotic. He has the most profound belief in the future of Canada."

"Really," said his lordship with faint interest. "Ah! Very nice, I'm sure." The supper of the future was of infinitely greater importance to him, and he devoutly hoped that it was in the near future.

"This is my boudoir," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, opening a door on the right hand side of a long corridor on the second landing. "It is very dark. Just wait a moment while I turn up the light."

The room was all in shadow except for the fitful glow from the log fire in the small grate, which shot up suddenly as Lord Camperdown glanced towards a large arm chair where Julie sat sleeping placidly.

"Great Heavens! Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, who is that?" he cried in an agitated voice, which contrasted strongly with his ordinary calm, even tones.

Mrs. Fitz-Robinson turned and saw the girl. She had forgotten all about her. How beautiful she looked to be sure, as she lay back unconscious of observation among the violet velvet cushions, her golden brown hair contrasting in rich beauty against the imperial coloring. The rosy flush of sleep was on her cheeks, and all trace of care and anxiety had vanished now.

"That," answered Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, "that is a little French friend of mine. You seem rather taken aback, Lord Camperdown. I forgot all about her, else I would not have brought you in here. Poor girl, she

is tired, we must not disturb her. Come away. You can see the picture another time."

She turned the light down again and they went out as noiselessly as they had come, leaving the room without awakening Julie, who, unaccustomed to late hours, had been very weary and overcome with sleep.

"What on earth is the matter, Lord Camperdown?" his hostess said when they returned to the brilliantly lighted hall, and she perceived that the fresh color had left his face, and his eyes had in them a strange, almost terrified, expression.

"Ah! Ah! Nothing, that is, ah! I have a little weakness about the heart and any excitement upsets me very much."

"You have had very little excitement this evening."

"Ah! yes, pardon me, your delightful ball and all that," he said, evasively, and then, perceiving the hardly veiled incredulity in the lady's face, he went on with the air of a man who resolves to make a clean breast of it. Ah! the fact is, my dear Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, your friend, the young lady in the boudoir, reminded me so much of a favorite ah! er—sister I lost two years ago and of whom I was very fond."

It flashed across Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's mind that she remembered Mrs. Green assuring her that Lord Camperdown had been an only child, and on matters con-

nected with the peerage Mrs. Green never made mistakes.

"A sister, did you say?" she inquired rather heartlessly.

"Yes, 'er—yes, my sister. I lost her two years ago and it was a great shock to me. Yes, I suffer from my heart, and the slightest thing upsets me."

He looked so very much upset and completely unnerved that Mrs. Fitz-Robinson thought he was going to faint, and hastily summoning a servant, ordered a glass of sherry to be brought him. After drinking this he seemed better and his fresh color slowly returned.

"I am really sorry you were so upset by the sight of my little friend, Julie," remarked Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. It will be painful, perhaps, for you to meet her again, and I had hoped to have interested you in her sad history. But you will not be likely to care to meet anyone who reminds you of your er—er—sister."

"Oh, I daresay she is not really like her, it must only have been one of those chance resemblances," said His Lordship, hurriedly.

"Yes, I expect if you saw my little French-Canadian friend from Bic closely, you would scarcely see the likeness a second time."

What was the matter with Lord Camperdown now? Why did this man come to balls if he was affected in

this curious way—he ought to go to a hospital rather, thought his puzzled hostess, because for a second time he grew deadly pale, and could utter no articulate sound, though afterwards Mrs. Fitz-Robinson declared that the word “Bic” proceeded from his tightly closed lips. He came to himself slowly and apologized for alarming her, begging to be excused. He would not wait until his sleigh came, but said he would drive to the Vice-Regal residence in an ordinary one. He was much distressed at having marred the harmony of her evening, and finally requested her to make his adieux to the Hon. Peter, and assured her that he would soon recover from his temporary weakness, which was aggravated, in all probability, by the change of climate.

Mrs. Fitz-Robinson said good night with many expressions of regret and rejoined her other guests. The ball continued till the small hours of the morning, and was always looked back upon as one of the best ever given in Ottawa. After everyone had gone, the host and hostess stood in the empty ball room talking over the events of the evening and comparing notes.

“And what did Lord Camperdown think of the new picture?” asked Mr. Fitz-Robinson, after having with much patience listened to his wife’s enthusiastic description of Lady N.’s new gown.

"I don't know. He didn't see it."

"Didn't see it? I thought, my dear, you took him specially to look at it?"

"The poor man got an attack of the heart and had to go home suddenly. Didn't you miss him at supper?"

"No. I don't think so. I was busy attending to the wants of the dowagers and I had not time to miss anyone."

"My dear," said his wife, musingly, "there is something very odd about this Lord Camperdown. Nonsense, you needn't laugh, I am sure of it?"

"You are letting your imagination run away with you as usual."

"I have no imagination, as you ought to know. I am a thoroughly practical person, but I'm perfectly convinced that there's some mystery about that man. By the way, do you remember the other day Mrs. Green was here at dinner and she told us about the pedigrees of all the visitors at Government House?"

"Yes, of course I do. Who could forget it? She talked as usual of nothing but the British aristocracy the whole evening. I got thoroughly sick of her and them. But what has that got to do with Lord Camperdown?"

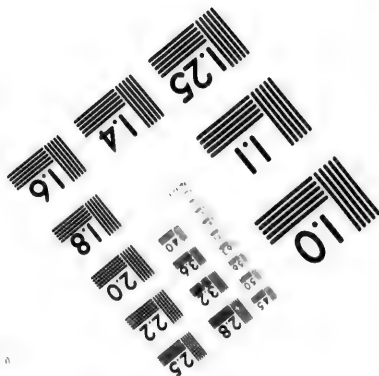
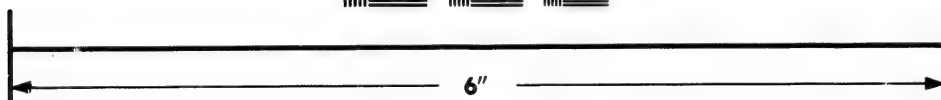
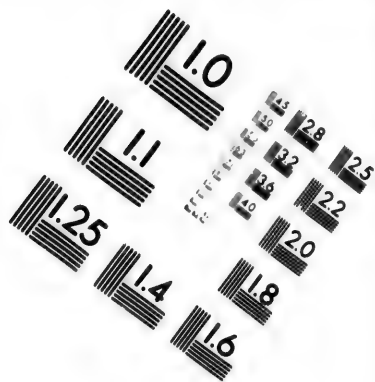
"Don't you remember she said that she had looked him up in both Burke and Debrett, as she always does

any new arrival, and had found the extent of his rent-roll, ancestry, and that he was the only child of the last baron."

"Yes. I remember all that perfectly."

"I'm so glad. I knew I wasn't mistaken," said the little lady triumphantly. Now, what could be Lord Camperdown's object in telling me, a perfect stranger, that he had had a sister to whom he was so much attached that a chance resemblance to her made him faint."

"My dear, if he told you that you may rely upon it, he told you the truth. Mrs. Green has probably made a mistake. But, I see you are determined to weave a romantic history about this extremely commonplace, elderly gentleman. Wait till to-morrow, for you look very tired. Now, good night, and don't dream of your mysterious Lord Camperdown."



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CHAPTER VIII.

"Ceremony keeps up things; 'tis like a penny glass to a rich spirit, or some excellent water; without it, the water were spilt and the spirit lost."—*Selden*.

JULIE had not waited until the end of the ball, for she was very much fatigued, and had gone back to her lonely lodging, slipping away quietly without disturbing her kind friend. When she arrived at the door of her boarding-house, it was opened to her by her landlady, who handed her one of those aggravating mis-sives on yellow paper, folded so ingeniously, and sealed with a red stamp, that when in a hurry one is always certain to tear the most important part of the tele-graphic message. This was exactly what Julie did, and it took her quite half an hour before she could collect the scattered fragments and piece them together to make a consecutive sentence, which ran thus :—

"Good news; I leave to-day for Ottawa."

M. GAGNON.

M. le curé leaving for Ottawa,—then the news must be good, indeed, to justify this important step; and Julie at once jumped to the conclusion that the long missing pirate treasure must be found. For many a long night she had not slept so soundly as on that of Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's ball, and she dreamed of Bic in summer-time, and thought she was paddling in Pierre's canoe far out into the waters of the great St. Lawrence, as she was wont to do before this grief had come upon her and changed the whole current of her life.

Next morning, the first thought that occurred to her was that M. Gagnon would arrive that day—but was that possible? She glanced again at the patchwork-like pieces of the telegram, and saw the date. No, it was hardly possible that he would come to-day, but she would go and tell her kind friend, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, the news was too good to keep to herself one moment longer than she could help.

This lady had hardly recovered from her exertions of the previous night, still she received Julie, and expressed her delight at the telegram.

"Of course it means that the treasure is found, there can be no doubt of that," she said.

"Do you think so, Madame?"

"Certainly, I do; I am sure of it. But M. Gagnon cannot be here for two or three days yet, and you must

not excite yourself, if he does not come for a week. I always thought, my dear, that things would turn out all right in the end for you, and now I am certain of it. Now, Julie, what did you think of my ball?"

"It was very fine, Madame; I was quite dazzled, though; and the dresses, Madame, oh! they were splendid."

"Yes, I think it *was* a success; I tried hard enough to make it so, I'm sure. Now, there is only one more show I want you to see before you leave Ottawa, and that is the opening of Parliament. It takes place to-morrow, in the Senate-Chamber, and I have got you a ticket for the gallery. You may never have an opportunity again, and it is a sight well worth seeing. I shall call for you at two o'clock to-morrow afternoon, and drive you to the House. Must you go, now? Good-bye, then; I'm glad to see you in such good spirits, to-day. Au revoir!"

"So it came to pass that Julie Lafleur, on the following afternoon, was comfortably seated in a corner of the Ladies' Gallery, overlooking the Senate-Chamber, and waiting to see the grand old-world pageantry amidst the rawness and newness of this continent, which takes place in Ottawa every year. This particular Thursday happened to fall on a cold, blustering February day, when a typical Canadian snow-storm raged without, and

the wind blew fierce and shrill round the nooks and crannies of the grey stone Parliament Buildings. For months, this day had been talked about, and many were the fair dames, from all parts of the vast Dominion—from Vancouver's Pacific shore, from the rocky Atlantic coast of Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Isle—who had come to be present at this political and social function of the opening of Parliament.

The Senate-Chamber was all light and color, its crimson hangings contrasting harmoniously with the light gowns of the ladies, and the dark blue and gold uniforms of the state officials. At three o'clock, a cannon fired a royal salute from a distant point on the other side of the river, giving the signal for the entrance of the Representative of Her Majesty in Canada, who came attended by his guard of honor and *aides des camp*, in the gorgeous paraphrenalia appertaining to vice-royalty. He took his seat, and round him were grouped many of those distinguished statesmen whose names will be handed down to posterity, as the pioneers of successful national movements in our great Dominion. There to the right were to be seen the rugged features of the Premier, standing out a massive figure, clear and distinct in his striking personality, towering over the heads of those in front of him. Here to the left, were

various picturesque French representatives, reminding the observer of those stately French counts and nobles of the old regime, bowing to their friends with courtly grace. And in little groups further forward, were seated the judges of the Supreme Court, clad in their crimson robes, bordered with ermine, and near them, serving for another contrast, were the high officials of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, attended by minor curates and deans, from outlying districts.

The unsophisticated spectator in the gallery was vastly amused by the performances of a little gentleman in black, who spent all his time in walking across the floor of the Senate Chamber bowing, as she thought, to no one in particular. He carried a long black stick, and had Julie been initiated into the manners of the great world, these little bows, so delightfully rendered, must have filled her with envying admiration. They were so regular, so precise, so exquisitely self-conscious.

How could they be otherwise, for was not the whole house filled with dignified and exalted personages entirely engaged in gazing at this little figure, which appeared to Julie very small, to attract so much attention. The ceremonies soon came to an end, Parliament was declared to be opened, all the exalted and non-exalted people departed, and the ladies were not slow

in finding their sleighs and driving home through the frosty air.

Julie had had some difficulty in leaving the gallery, owing to the crowd, and in this way had missed Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. The latter, after waiting for a time, concluded that the girl had gone home, and consequently did not look for her.

On emerging from the gallery, Julie missed her way to the main door and accosted a very polite official, who guided her and offered to show her the various objects of interest in the buildings. She willingly accepted his offer, and the guide proved to be a very efficient one, for he had been acting as cicerone for many years, and under his care she saw every nook and cranny in the magnificent buildings. While in the picturesque Gothic library, one of the finest examples of that style of architecture in this country, the guide was called away, and Julie was again left to herself. It was dusk now and everyone seemed to have gone from the place, except a few late students who were poring over the old volumes, in a distant corner.

Suddenly, from her seat, she saw pass by the doorway the flutter of what she knew to be the black robe of a priest, and caught a glimpse of the rugged, ascetic features of Father Gagnon. Yes, she was sure it was he. He walked in just that quick, jerky way; ah! she

would follow him, he must be searching for her. But on reaching the main corridor there was no sign of him. Where could he have gone? Perhaps he had turned down this way. She threaded her way through what seemed to her an endless labyrinth of passages, and felt bewildered. Where could he be? She was just giving up in despair when the sound of voices reached her from a little alcove in a side hall. That was the curé's voice. Yes, there was no mistaking those clear, trenchant tones; but there was a note in his voice now which Julie had never heard before. A stern, threatening, angry cadence, and the voice which answered him, though she could not distinguish the words, was equally angry, in its haughty, sarcastic accents. She must interrupt them, however; she must tell the curé of her presence here.

"M. Gagnon," she said, stepping forward and holding out her hand. "M. Gagnon, I am so glad to see you. I did not know you had arrived."

The priest turned sharply round at her words of greeting, no sign of pleasure in his voice, and the man to whom he had been speaking looked at the girl anxiously for an instant and then made a movement as if he would walk away.

But the curé detained him with a glance, saying:

"No, you do not escape me now. You must answer

me after all these years. Julie, my child, I have no time to attend to you now. Go home. I will follow you there."

She went without a word. It had been her life-long custom to obey M. le curé implicitly, and she obeyed him now without hesitating.

"She came opportunely," said M. Gagnon, turning to the other, a tall, fresh looking man of about his own age, but in marked contrast to him. One might have served as a model for an early knight of the holy cross, who had overcome the world and the pleasures thereof, his eyes lighted up with enthusiasm for His Master's cause and the flock which was committed to his charge. The other was of different stamp. The world to him had been a pleasure ground all his life, to take all the good he could get from it had been the keynote of his career, and until this moment no Nemesis had warned him of a coming judgment.

"She came opportunely," repeated the curé.

"What do you mean?" said the other, in his slow, drawling way.

"I mean that your daughter appeared exactly at the right moment, guided by the good Providence which watches over the desolate and oppressed."

"I am at a loss to understand you, sir. My daughter, you said? She is in England, and this young lady

I never saw before. My dear sir, I think, with all due respect to your cloth, that you must be mad."

"Herbert Flower, once and for all, I ask you to settle this matter peaceably. I have no wish to expose you, though you richly deserve it. But I ask for restitution, for some signs of contrition on your part. Are you made of stone? I could not have believed that human nature was so false as this."

"My good sir, let me assure you again that you have made a mistake. I have never seen you before, and perhaps for your own peace of mind it will be as well if I never see you again. My poor harmless presence seems to agitate you, you really look ill."

M. le curé had a large stock of patience, but it was now well-nigh exhausted; there was something horribly exasperating in this man's cool, sarcastic words. Could he have mistaken him—the thought flashed across his mind but for a moment, to die away as quickly as it had come.

"No, I am not mistaken in you, my lord, as you are called, now-a-days. I am not mistaken in you, Herbert Flower, time has dealt too gently with you for that—you are one of this world's favorites. You feast in high places, you bear an honored name, while your wife and daughter are left, for all you know, to starve in the remote village of Bic."

Not a shade passed over the face of the man he de-

nounced. His self-control was wonderful, as he replied :

" I do not know of whom you speak. I know nothing of that remote village you mention. Allow me to assure you that Lady Camperdown and my daughter are both in London at this present moment, and I haven't the slightest idea about whom you are speaking."

" Herbert Flower, you surpass Ananias and Sapphira, they were nothing to you, but it is to be war between us, I see. I am prepared, and you will regret having defied me. We shall meet again."

The priest walked away, metaphorically, at least, shaking the dust from his shoes, and the fresh looking Englishman watched him disappear down the corridor, and then sighing, as if a weight had been lifted from his mind, sat down on a bench in the alcove.

" Great heavens," he said, " that was an ordeal, but I think I came out of it pretty well, considering that it was so unexpected. Who could have dreamed that the old fanatic would turn up at this late hour of the day and recognize me. But I'm perfectly safe, no need to worry about that. Poor Julie, I wonder how the governor came to tell me she was dead ; the wish was father to the thought, I expect. I hope they haven't got that certificate ; if they have, things might be a little awkward for me, but I don't think they can do much now."

CHAPTER IX.

Save, oh ! save
From doubt, when all is double ;
When wise men are not strong,
When comfort turns to trouble,
When just men suffer wrong,
When faiths are built on dust,
When love is half mistrust,
Hungry and barren, and sharp as the sea—
Oh ! set us free.

Matthew Arnold.

ON the morning following the meeting of Lord Camperdown and the good curé of Bic, a small council of war was held in Julie's sitting-room, and Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, M. Gagnon and Julie herself, were present. They had judged it best to tell her of Lord Camperdown's relationship to her, and consulted her as to the advisability of telling her mother of his re-appearance in the country. On consideration, they all agreed that it would be better to keep silent, for there was no use raking up the ashes of a dead past, or reviving memo-

ries which could only be bitter. Madame Lafleur had settled down comfortably, having outlived her sorrow and become reconciled to her lot, believing that he to whom she had given her love, slept somewhere beneath the green sod, otherwise he would not have kept silence for so long.

The three had much to talk over ; there was the unmasking of his lordship, which would be a delicate task ; there was the wonderful discovery of the old pirate's treasure ; and, lastly, there was the all important question of Pierre's health, which was, just now, in a very precarious condition. Julie had, only that morning, received a letter from Pierre Grenier's warder at St. Vincent de Paul, telling her that the prisoner could scarcely work an hour at his allotted task, that he was gradually losing his strength, and that continually he asked for her. The curé, also, had received a note from the prison doctor, saying, that whatever was to be done, must be done quickly, for Grenier had, in his opinion, but a few weeks more to live.

"And what can we do, Madame ?" said Julie, piteously. "We are all so helpless, we have no money, I have spent my last cent ; I can do nothing ; it is terrible to think that Pierre must be left there to die."

"He will not be left there to die," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, "though things look very black just at pre-

sent. Unfortunately, I cannot help you now financially. I have overstepped my allowance this quarter, and hardly like to ask for more. But your father must help you."

"My father?" said the girl, wonderingly, forgetting this newly-found relation.

"Yes, your father—Lord Camperdown."

"I would not ask help from him," said Julie, proudly. "Never."

"No, perhaps not, for yourself, my child, but for Pierre's sake. Remember, it is a case of life or death, we must be prompt. We must employ every means in our power to effect his release. This is not a time for pride, Julie."

"Madame, rather than accept help from Lord Camperdown, I would starve."

"Yes, yes, Julie, I allow all that, and I admire your independent spirit, but you must put all personal considerations in the background. You must think of Pierre, and Pierre alone. This Lord Camperdown has wealth, unbounded wealth, and has much influence—we must enlist him on your side, by some means or other."

"Madame," said M. Gagnon, "it is useless. He will do nothing for us. I met him face to face, yesterday; he tried to pass me by, but I barred his way. He said

he did not know me, but I forced him to listen. At first I remonstrated gently with him, and implored help for his wife whom he had deserted. He utterly denied having ever met me before, and said I must be completely mistaken in him, but I could see him wince under my gaze, and knew that it was only a very fine piece of acting on his lordship's part. I could not help admiring the man's magnificent self-control, and I was, at first, rather shaken in my own mind as to whether this could actually be the Herbert Flower of the old days, at Bic."

"M. Gagnon, this man must be met with his own weapons, despicable as they are," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. "One thing he values, and that is the approbation of the world in which he moves. We must strike at the root of the matter—threaten to expose him, but in an unexpected manner. Listen, I have a plan—but no, on second thoughts, I will not tell even you of it. Can you meet in my boudoir at five to-morrow afternoon, in order that I may summon you in case I need your help in my little plot?"

"Yes, madame, at any hour you wish. Julie and I have few engagements in your gay capital."

"Well, then, that is settled, do not be later than five. Now, M. Gagnon, tell me about the discovery of the mysterious treasure, I have been wild with excitement

to hear all about it ever since Julie told me there was the slightest chance of finding it."

"Oh, there is not much to tell about that," said M. le curé. The discovery came about very simply. Old Jacques, the fisherman, died three weeks ago, and of course, when dying, sent for me. You know, Madame, that under ordinary circumstances, any confessions made to a priest, are sacred, but the old man's conscience gave him no rest, and he felt that he had done Pierre Grenier a well-nigh irreparable wrong, and wished me to write down his confession, and after his death to make it public. It seems that Pierre had incurred the hatred of Jean Pinsonneault by his success in winning the affections of Julie, and the defeated rival had made a vow to revenge himself on the interloper. For a long time no opportunity presented itself, for Pierre's character was unimpeachable, and every one liked and respected him. At length, however—I verily believe that Satan plays into the hands of his disciples—the opportunity came, and it came through my unfortunate carelessness in leaving my spectacles at old Wilson's house. You know all that part of the story, and how strong the circumstantial evidence was against Grenier."

"In Jacques' statement he said that both Jean Pinsonneault and his father had offered him a hundred

dollars, which was a heavy bribe to a poor man in his position, to bear false witness against Pierre Grenier. The old fisherman had, it seems, seen him go into the house about midnight, and come out in great haste a few moments later, and when he had disappeared, Jean Pinsonneault appeared at the door, taking with him a heavy wooden chest, which he carried slowly and with great difficulty. He was much startled at seeing the old man and bound him over to silence. Next morning he offered him the bribe and half Wilson's treasure if he would help him to incriminate Pierre by telling half the truth. Between them they buried the treasure in old Wilson's garden, and after Jean's sudden death the old fisherman never dared to dig it up."

"What becomes of it now?" said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson.

"It goes to the church, as old Wilson originally intended that it should. In truth, this gold has had many a strange adventure."

"Indeed it has," said the lady. "I suppose this confession will awaken public sympathy in Pierre's case. It seems to me that he was much more sinned against than sinning."

"It has already aroused much sympathy for him, Madame," replied the priest. "I have had the confession published all over the country, and I think it will bring help in time, but the wheels of the law move

very slowly, and Pierre may be beyond all human help e'er he obtains his release."

"M. Gagnon, you must look on the bright side of things. What is the use of taking such a gloomy view? I have the greatest faith in my plan. Wait till to-morrow, we shall see if Lord Camperdown will not be forced to help us. Now, I must go. Do not fail me to-morrow."

Next afternoon Mrs. Fitz-Robinson had invited about thirty of the very innermost of the inner circle of Ottawa to one of her delightful little afternoon teas in her pink drawing-room. People always came to these afternoon receptions, though they talked about their entertainer's eccentricities, very freely, as soon as they had left the front door steps. That morning, in town, during one of her shopping expeditions, the little lady had met Lord Camperdown, not quite so accidentally as she would wish it to appear, standing at the door of the Russell House. She greeted him with one of her prettiest smiles and invited him to her tea that afternoon, telling him that it was given expressly for him, which was quite true, though hardly in the flattering sense he took it.

The inevitable Mrs. Green, with her eternal reminiscences of the aristocracy, was to the front to-day. She had scented nobility from afar, and wished to gaze once more on the face of a real live lord.

"Ah! there he is," she said eagerly, to Captain Smythe, who was handing her her tea without sugar. "Ah! Lord Camperdown has arrived, I see. Isn't he good looking? See, he's coming to speak to me. Hold my tea cup, please. Yes, thank your lordship, I am very well and happy to meet you. How do you like this country?"

"Very much, really, ah! very much," said his lordship, laconically.

"I suppose you have had some skating? You do not have much on your ancestral acres at Camperdown?" questioned Mrs. Green.

"No, the climate is rather warm for that."

"Mrs. Green," put in the new aide-de-camp, "I was at a picnic last night. It was great fun, I can tell you."

"A picnic in this weather?"

"Yes, a tobogganning picnic. We went first for a long drive to the hill, about four miles out of town, dragging our toboggans with us. Then we lighted fires on the snow and made tea. It was very picturesque, I assure you. The most amusing thing I ever saw in my life happened at it. You know there's a tremendous hollow in the middle of the slide, and after it the hill goes up suddenly."

"Yes, I know it perfectly," said Mrs. Green, longing to continue her remarks to his lordship.

"There were about twenty of us sliding last night, among the number was that pretty American girl, Miss Van Schuyler."

"Do you mean the girl with the beautiful hair, who is spending the winter with Lady K?"

"Yes, the girl with the beautiful hair," replied Captain Smythe, smiling mischievously, "Yes, she was there, and so were Jones, of the Inland Revenue Department, and the dark little Frenchman whose name I forget, but both these youths are devoted to Miss Van Schuyler. When I first got to the top of the hill there they were standing, disputing as to which of them should take her down on his toboggan, and Miss Scott was watching them with a great deal of interest."

"Yes, of course," put in Mrs. Green, "it was reported that she and Mr. Jones were engaged, at least the course of their true love seemed to be running smoothly enough until the fair American came here, then Mr. Jones suddenly transferred his allegiance."

"Miss Scott had her revenge last night, at any rate," went on the aide-de-camp, "and I suppose under the circumstances she is to be forgiven. I never laughed so much in my life. Jones and the young lady finally went down together, and all went well until they came first to the hollow and then to the bump in the slide. Then I saw something dark fall from Miss Van Schuy-

ler's head, and this object was picked up a moment afterwards by Miss Scott, who had followed down the slide on the Frenchman's toboggan. All four climbed the hill slowly, Jones and the American girl arriving at the top first. I thought the young lady looked queer, but couldn't make out exactly what was wrong. Presently Miss Scott arrived, and walking over to her rival, handed her before us all, the dark round object, saying in a voice which everyone could hear quite distinctly : " Miss Van Schuyler, I think this is your hair. I picked it up just now." Miss Van Schuyler fainted, and there was a scene which I shall never forget."

" What, all those beautiful basket plaits false ?" said Mrs. Green. " It is too bad. But what a spiteful thing for the other girl to do."

" Wasn't it ? Fancy poor Jones' horror. They tell me he has been composing poetry by the yard lately on the American's fair locks, beauty leading him by a single hair, and all that sort of thing. I expect Miss Van Schuyler will leave for the land of the brave and the free, where the stars and stripes wave, to-morrow, and that Ottawa will see her no more."

" What gossip are you two talking," interrupted their hostess, coming towards them. " Captain Smythe, I'm ashamed of you, repeating such ill-natured stories."

" I'm not repeating stories, I was an eye-witness of the whole thing. It was as good as a play."

"You all seem to be in a mood for hearing stories this afternoon," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, seating herself in her comfortable arm chair and looking at her visitors, who were enjoying their tea, their bread and butter and gossip. "Supposing I tell you a story myself for a change. It is a true story and very interesting, I can assure you."

"Then tell it by all means," assented a chorus of voices.

"Very well then, I will, as the children say, begin at the beginning. I'm afraid you are not very comfortable, Lord Camperdown. Take this arm chair."

She pushed a large arm chair towards him and placed it directly under the chandelier, so that the soft, clear light fell full on his face, leaving not one line in shadow. And then she drew her chair forward, and quite as it were by accident, seated herself exactly opposite him.

"Yes," she went on, "it is a true story, though, perhaps, you will not believe it. There is a villain in the story, too, a very aristocratic villain. I could hardly believe that such people could exist. Years ago, many years ago, there lived in a remote French Canadian village on the lower St. Lawrence, a pretty French girl named Julie (I forget her other name), but she was the Mayor's daughter. What, going Lord Camperdown? It is early yet. If you go now I shall think my story has frightened you away."

His lordship looked very angry, more angry certainly than the occasion seemed to warrant, as he replied haughtily: "Angry? Not in the least Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. What could your story have to do with me? I thought it was late. By all means continue. I shall wait till the end. I am really much interested."

"That is right, Lord Camperdown," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. "Well, as I was saying, the Mayor's daughter was the most attractive girl in the village, but, she was hard to please, it seems, and none of her many admirers seemed to touch her heart. Perhaps she expected too much. I cannot tell. At length, however, she met her fate, for it came to pass that one summer an Englishman, his name was Flower, I think—pretty name, was it not, Lord Camperdown?—came to this remote village for the fishing, and fell in love with the French Canadian girl. They were married in the Roman Catholic Church, which ceremony was valid in Canada, even though one of the contracting parties was a Protestant, even though one of the contracting parties was a Protestant," she repeated slowly, looking Lord Camperdown full in the face the while.

Ah! She had touched him at last; he could not meet her gaze; there was in his eyes the self-same look of terror that she had seen there the night of the ball.

" Yes, he married, and it appears that the poor girl was very fond of him, much more so than he deserved, and things went on smoothly for two or three months, and then he got tired of her, calmly deserted her, making no provision for her. What, did you speak, Lord Camperdown ? Ah ! I was mistaken. I thought you said something. Yes, he grew tired of her, went back to England, and left her, and that was the last she ever saw of him from that day to this."

" I don't see anything so very extraordinary in your story," said Mrs. Green. I expect there are hundreds of such cases on record."

" Wait, I have not come to the extraordinary part yet. This young Englishman a few years later inherited his father's title and estates, and without inquiring whether the Canadian girl was dead or alive, straightway married an English heiress. You would all be surprised to know how I learned the facts of the case. Some day, perhaps, I shall tell you how I even have the marriage certificate of Julie in my possession, here in this very room. Would you really care to see it ? I actually have it in my pocket now."

She was somewhat in shadow, and no one observed that, when she stretched out her hand to get the paper out of her pocket, it was grasped by Lord Camperdown, who whispered in her ear, his aristocratic calm accents marvellously changed, and now harsh and grating :

"You shall not show that paper, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson," he said, roughly.

"What do you mean, Lord Camperdown?"

"I cannot tell you here what I mean, before all these people, but you must not show that paper." He held her wrist in an iron grip. She could have screamed with the pain, but that would never do. She had won, she knew now, and hers was the triumph.

"Lord Camperdown, I will not show that certificate now, but you must stay till all these people have gone and give me some explanation. Let my hand go at once. I promise you. Is not that enough?"

"Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, why don't you go on with your story, we are all waiting," said Captain Smythe.

"I was answering Lord Camperdown's questions. Where was I in my story? Tell me."

"The hero had just come into the title and estates, and was saddled with two wives."

"Oh! yes, then the other wife, the Canadian one, died, I think, and that was the end of it. She never knew that she was by right a baroness of Great Britain and Ireland and that her husband was still alive."

"Well, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, I don't think your story very exciting, it seems to have missed its point," said Mrs. Green, discontentedly. "It would have been better if the French wife had turned up again and made a

fuss and have shown the hero in his true colors. Don't you think so, Lord Camperdown ?"

" Ah ! yes, Mrs. Green, quite so, in fact I was not paying much attention to the tale."

" Were you not ?" remarked Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, pointedly. " What, are you all going already ? why, it is not six o'clock yet. But you will stay a little longer, Lord Camperdown ?"

His lordship assented gloomily, and watched the others depart with envious eyes. How he hated this officious little woman who had got hold of his early history in some mysterious way ! He must be polite to her, however, and find out exactly how much she knew, and at all hazards get that certificate in his own possession.

When all her other guests had gone, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson turned to him and said, in her most glacial voice : " And now, Lord Camperdown, what explanation have you to offer me for your most extraordinary conduct this afternoon ?"

" Explanation, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson. It was a joke my dear madame, a joke, I assure you. Are you one of those people who can't see a joke ?"

" I think, Lord Camperdown, I can see a joke as well as anyone, but this is no time for trifling. It is grim truth we are dealing with now. Do not attempt

to trifle with me. I know all your past, and have such proof that with all your cleverness you cannot withstand."

"You threaten me, madame?"

"I wish you to compensate in some small measure, the wife you deserted, the daughter who grew up in ignorance of your existence, and to make amends though late."

"All this is very well," sneered his lordship. "You threaten me, madame. How do you know I am the man? Your impulsive disposition, you know, often gets the better of your judgment."

"How do I know? You are maddening, Lord Camperdown. How do I know? See, I will show you."

She rang a little silver bell, which was lying on the tea table, and a moment afterwards the silkendraperies over the door way were pushed aside and M. Gagnon, in his long, dark, priestly robe, entered, leading Julie by the hand.

"Here are my proofs, Lord Camperdown," said Mrs. Fitz-Robinson, pointing to them. "Allow me to introduce you to your daughter, M. Gagnon, I think, you have met before."

"You are very clever, Mrs. Fitz-Robinson," said his lordship, his face white with ill-suppressed passion. "You have caught me in a trap. It was a well-laid

scheme. My dear madame, you have missed your vocation. Nature formed you for a private detective."

She paid no attention to his sneers, but demanded quietly : " And now what do you intend to do ?"

" Yes, what do you intend to do ?" repeated M. Gagnon. " We have no wish to cause a scandal or make a scene, but unless you help your daughter, who is in such sore distress, the whole country will ring with your story. Julie, my child, you may go now. Lord Camperdown, you have seen your daughter for the last time."

His lordship made a movement towards her, holding out his hand, but the girl drew back, leaving the room as noiselessly and suddenly as she had come.

" What do you want with me?" he demanded, turning to the priest.

" That is easily told. Your daughter is grieving because of the imprisonment of Pierre Grenier, whose story you know."

" I should think I did know it," replied his lordship, irritably. " Mrs. Fitz-Robinson has told us all of it often enough, goodness knows, and I do not approve of the alliance. I should think my daughter might aspire to something higher than a convict."

" She might have done so," retorted the priest, " had she been brought up as your daughter. Nature pro-

vided the girl with gifts, which if cultivated, would have adorned any station, but all this is begging the question. She loves this man, convict as you call him. By the way, did you ever think that you yourself might be in a prison, too, were your history told? The law, I believe, is no respecter of persons."

His lordship winced. He had considered this question and indeed had put the case before an eminent legal man in Ottawa, giving of course fictitious names and places, and the lawyer's opinion had been by no means reassuring.

"Now," continued M. Gagnon, "we want five hundred dollars at once for your daughter, who is almost penniless. We want you to exert all your influence, and you know most of the influential people here, to help to obtain Pierre Grenier's release, and we want you to provide for your wife in her old age."

"Modest requests, surely," muttered his lordship, sullenly, but I suppose I shall have to give in. You've got me in your clutches. I don't see why I should help this convict fellow."

"You don't?" said M. Gagnon, in his wrath and excitement, walking hurriedly up and down the room, his long, black robes contrasting strangely with the dainty roseate hued, silken draperies and furniture; "You don't? Then I will tell you. It is because his release

means life and happiness to Julie ; she has given her love, her whole being, to him, and, convict though you call him, he is worthy of it all, for Pierre Grenier is an upright, honorable, and truthful man."

"It is indeed a thousand pities that such a paragon should languish in prison," said his lordship, sarcastically. "I am only surprised that they should ever have put him there. I will do what you wish, the game is up, and I have lost. But what security have I that you will keep silence ? I know what women's tongues are," he said, glaring at Mrs. Fitz-Robinson.

"If you keep your part of the compact be assured that I shall keep mine. You will find, Lord Camperdown, that women can keep secrets admirably, when it pleases them to do so," the lady said.

"Very well, madame, I suppose I am at liberty to go now. It is scarcely probable that we shall ever meet again, for I shall leave this confounded country as soon as possible. I have the honor to bid you good-bye."

"His lordship, whether from fear, or touched with a tardy repentance, kept his word to the very letter, and began his programme that night at dinner with his vice-regal hosts. When the conversation languished somewhat towards the end of the repast, he told the story of Julie, his daughter, of course suppressing that

part of her history relative to himself. And he told it with such grace of diction, such pathetic interest, that the sympathies of the whole table were aroused, and all were enlisted in the cause of this faithful and devoted French peasant girl.

The wheels of justice move slowly, but Julie had now many powerful and influential friends, and before a month had passed she and M. Gagnon left the Dominion capital for St. Vincent de Paul, armed with the order for Pierre's release. Their joy that bright spring day was but o'ershadowed by the haunting dread that they might be too late, that, ere man could set their loved one free, the great jailor, death, would claim him as his captive. All that lay within human power they had done. Would Heaven be merciful to them and restore Pierre to their care ?

CHAPTER X.

"Old France has lost the lays,
It loved in olden time,
But these sweet songs of other days
Still linger in our clime.

Still may we hear them sung
By many a peasant maid,
As with her heart upon her tongue
She wanders through the glade."

We hear them still, when glows
The moon in flowery dells,
And when across the sparkling snows,
Ring out the jingling bells.

Arthur Weir.

ON arriving at the prison, M. Gagnon and Julie found Pierre's health to be in so precarious a condition that it was out of the question to undertake the long and tedious journey to Bic at once.

Grenier had decided, if he should ever recover, that he would return to live at his old home, having, through the instrumentality of his benefactors at Ottawa, procured

the appointment of lighthouse-keeper there. All promised well, and if he could only regain his health, the future seemed bright and full of hope to the released prisoner.

M. Gagnon had looked at things from every point of view, and having talked over matters with Julie, thought the wisest plan would be to have the marriage take place at once, in order that after he returned to his parochial duties, she might remain behind and care for Pierre. The priest wrote to Madame Lafleur to ask her consent to this arrangement, and also begged her to come to Montreal to be present at the ceremony. The first request she readily acceded to, but said that she was now too old and infirm to travel to Montreal, and trusted in M. le curé to make suitable arrangements, and finally, hoped to see them all back at Bic before very long.

When she first arrived in Montreal, Julie was comfortably established with an old widow lady, who had known M. Gagnon in his college days, many years ago. This kindly dame took quiet a motherly interest in the girl after hearing her story, and she felt happier now than she had done since the old days before trouble came to destroy her life's peace. M. Gagnon and Pierre had rooms a block or two from Julie's abode, in the French quarter of the city. During the weeks of

waiting which were necessary, in order to have the banns thrice proclaimed in the parish church of Notre Dame, the three whiled away the bright spring days in exploring the city and its environs. Many an expedition they took to the picturesque suburbs of Canada's metropolis, and M. Gagnon was a delightful cicerone on these little journeys, for he was learned, as are few, in the historic and antiquarian lore, with which French Canada abounds. The days flew all too quickly when he guided Pierre and Julie from place to place, pointing out the spots where glorious deeds had been wrought in the heroic age of New France, ere the commercial spirit of our times had well nigh destroyed the chivalric element on this continent.

One day they would drive to the Seigneury, where the Sieur de La Salle had built himself a manor house, on what he truly judged to be the finest spot he could choose for a permanent abiding place, after his many adventures and perilous voyages. The curé pointed out the ruins of Champlain's trading post, and the old fort, where he was wont to barter with the Indians, and showed them how well had been traced out the ground of a palisaded village. With graphic diction, and a high eloquence in keeping with his subject, the priest conjured up to their mental vision the brilliant pictures of the seignorial times in this country, when a

modified form of old-world feudalism held sway, and when scions of the noblest families of France, imbued with daring in the cause of King and Holy Mother Church, filled the land with echoes of their daring deeds, and often he would go back to a still earlier time, relating to them the wondrous story of the discovery of Hochelaga by the Breton captain Jacques Cartier, making the dry narrative, over which they were wont to yawn in their school days, sound to them like a fairy tale. With enthusiasm he told them of the friendly greeting the Hurons accorded to the French explorer, whom they thought a denizen from another world, praying for their conversion to the one true faith. So graphically did M. Gagnon describe the doings of that olden time that Julie sometimes felt that she saw these hardy bands of adventurous spirits sailing in their primitive vessels, the vast silvery sheet of the great St. Lawrence, straining their eyes in vain search for that long sought highway to the Indies, whose discovery destiny had reserved for the people of another age and nationality.

As the weather grew milder the trio ventured on longer expeditions, and one bright spring morning crossed to Chambly, a place full of associations to the curé, who had spent many a day in his early youth at this historic spot. He conducted them to the fort, and

recalled to their memories the brilliant deeds of the De Salaberry warrior, the hero of Chateauguay. In the little church they gazed with reverential eyes on the obelisks erected in honor of him who bore on his arms the motto bestowed by Henry of Navarre, "*Force à superbe, mercy à faible*," and whose career so nobly bore out the spirit of that proud legend.

At the curé's reminiscences, Pierre's languid eyes would brighten, and living, as it were, in the glowing past, he forgot for a time the gloomy shadow of sin, which had blighted his own young life. And when the three wandered far away on the quiet country roads, Julie would sing in her sweet, clear voice the songs they loved, those quaint Canadian melodies, half humorous, with a touch of pathos in them, and their music seemed to drive away all bitterness from Pierre Grenier's memories of the past three years. These songs of French Canada, how characteristic they are, with an individuality all their own, and Julie sang them from her heart; "*Pas derrier chez mon père*," "*En roulant ma boule*," and "*Sur le pont d'Avignon*," were her favorites, except when her mood would change and she would break into the familiar :

" Chante Rossignol chante
Toi qui a le cœur gai ;
Tu as le cœur à rire
Moi je l'ai-t à pleurer."

These songs of Canada, how dear they are to the Canadian wherever he may roam, conjuring up the remembrance of the maple forest, the snow-clad woods, and the jingling of the merry sleigh bells on crisp, frosty star-lighted nights !

But these halcyon days could not last for ever. M. Gagnon's little flock were anxious for his return, for the young curé, who had taken his place for a time, was to them but a poor substitute. The banns, too, had been proclaimed for three successive Sundays in the parish church, and there was no adequate reason why the marriage should be longer delayed ; it would be some weeks yet before Pierre could travel to Bic, and the curé was very anxious to return home as soon as possible.

It was the afternoon before the wedding, and the little party of three had driven up the mountain for a last look at Montreal from the summit. It was one of those lovely clear days of early summer when each object stands distinctly defined on the horizon ; the foliage was in the tender fresh green of its new beauty, and a vast and grand panorama lay stretched below the feet of the gazers. In the far distance they could see the peaks of the great Adirondacks, and the emerald hills of Vermont, while to the east, as far as the eye could reach, was the mighty St. Lawrence, its junction

with the Ottawa marked by the distinctive 'colors of the rival waters. Beyond the round fortified island, named after the sainted wife of Champlain, they could see the dim, blue, sugar loaf mountain of St. Hilaire, and from the myriad villages on the river banks glistened church steeples dazzling in the sun of this sweet young summer time. Days such as this pass all too quickly, and the curé was the first to remind Julie that she must be up betimes next morning, for that would be her wedding day, and they must tear themselves away from Mount Royal and its attractions.

The marriage morn was in all respects a beautiful one, the sky was clear and blue, not even one tiny cloud broke its unruffled surface, and at eight o'clock the small party was assembled in the church of Our Lady of Lourdes, awaiting the bride. Julie had chosen this church in which to be married out of the many in Montreal, and by her choice of it showed that somewhere deep down in her nature slumbered artistic instincts. To this church, during her residence in the Canadian metropolis, she was wont to come to say her devotions, and to gaze with admiration, mingled with reverential awe, on the paintings, which more nearly than others in the Dominion resemble those of the vast cathedrals of European cities. Here, with much more skill and refinement than are usually found in western

churches, are faithfully and admirably portrayed the events of the life of the Holy Mary. This the central figure, the *motif*, as it were, of the whole ornamentation of the edifice Julie loved to look on with that unquestioning adoration seldom to be found, except in the devout and simple-minded Catholic. Though the girl knew little of the laws of art, the emotional and religious sides of her nature held her spell-bound as she stood before that life-like figure, with the arms meekly folded across the breast, far removed from earthly turmoils and cares, supported only by the ethereal clouds of Heaven, and clothed with the sun.

On that beautiful morning Julie entered the church with her old and faithful friend, M. Gagnon, and the expression on her face was one of quiet happiness, albeit a happiness vastly different from that depicted on her bright countenance, when we first met her in her mother's garden many years ago.

Her beauty was now more subdued, more chastened and matured, and as the sun streamed through the stained glass window, its rays, like a halo, lighted on her wondrous nut-brown hair, as if the patient saints, who slept beneath the altar, had crowned her for her faith and long endurance.

The service over, all returned to Julie's lodging

where madame had prepared a little breakfast in honor of the occasion, and they made merry after the custom of these good French Canadians. Of course M. Gagnon made a speech, to which Pierre replied, and then madame's husband, who was one of those men to be found in all grades of society, always spoken of as madame's husband, essayed to make one also, but failed lamentably, thereby incurring the wrath of madame, who hated failure of any kind. In feasting and merriment the day passed away, and soon it was time for the curé to go, as he wished to take the steamer down to Quebec that evening and thence to Bic. Pierre and Julie accompanied him to the wharf, and saw the last of him as he stood on the deck of the steamer, amidst a heterogeneous crowd of children, nurses, and anxious mothers, who were taking their noisy flocks down to the coast for their summer outing. Thoroughly out of place the good man looked in this busy crowd, a mediæval figure amid the pushing practicality of our day, but he would not have to endure the discomfort long. Soon he would be back with his own people, in his quiet presbytery on the banks of the great river.

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CHAPTER XI.

"Then gavest Thou the smile
Whence angel wings thrill quick like summer lightning,
Vouchsafing rest beside thee, where they never
From Love and Faith may sever."

E. B. Browning.

THE Island of Bic glistened in the autumn sunlight like some bright gem set in the molten silver stream of the great St. Lawrence, which glimmered with a million varied lights ; the day was perfect in its bracing freshness, a hundred times more exhilarating than champagne, that freshness of the pure dry Canadian air. The scent of new mown hay was wafted across the waters from a distant meadow on the main land, and the silence of the afternoon was only broken by the muffled movement of a canoe paddled swiftly through the shining waters.

In this canoe sat two persons. Very silent they were, devoting, it seemed, all their energies to the locomotion of their skiff until they reached the shore of

Bic Island, where they disembarked. On the beach stood a tall, weather-beaten French Canadian, who welcomed them effusively, holding out his hand and saying :

“ Ah, Pierre! so you have come at last. Well, we’ve been expecting you a long time. And so you are to take my place. You are welcome to it, I’m sure, for I’ve been here for twelve years and I’ve had enough of it. I’m fond of the island, though it is very lonely, especially in winter, and perhaps when I get away I may be sorry I left, but I’ve got a situation in Montreal. That will be livelier than here, and there’s more pay, too, and that’s what we all try for, eh ! So this is your wife ? Ah, madame, I used to know you many a year ago when you were scarcely able to walk. Now come, I’ll show you the lights. I’ve got to be off at five o’clock. Will you wait here madame while we go up to the tower ?”

“ Ves Monsieur, I shall be perfectly content here.”

Perfectly content ; yes, that expressed Julie Grenier’s state of mind most accurately. She was content, alas ! how few of us can say those words with truth. Her part was done, her work accomplished, her heart’s desire fulfilled. What mattered it to her that her life henceforth would be spent on this lonely island, where she could hold little intercourse with the outer world ?

What mattered it to her that she was thus exiled ? She had Pierre, Pierre who had gradually, under the care of M. Gagnon and herself, been nursed back to health and strength. Pierre was free, he had been provided for by the kindness of friends, who had procured for him the appointment of the keeper of Bic Lighthouse. It was an appointment for which he was eminently fitted, knowing as he did every channel and eddy of the river in these parts. Mrs. Fitz-Robinson's energy and kindness had helped him materially after his release, and she never rested until this provision had been made for him.

For long after Pierre's release the curé and Julie feared that freedom had come too late, and that the dread insidious consumption had marked him as a victim, but happiness and liberty worked wonders for him, and after a few months of his open-air life in the wild woods, for which he had pined, the color returned to his wan face, the thin, sunken cheeks filled out, and the stooping shoulders became upright. Now, in October, he was strong enough to undertake his new duties, and he and Julie had left her mother's house that afternoon for their new dwelling.

Poor Madame Lasseur found it hard to part with her daughter so soon again, for she was ageing very fast, but Julie comforted her with the assurance that half an

hour's rowing would bring her from the island at any time, and promised to visit her at least three times a week. The old lady had never been told of her husband's re-appearance, nor of his perfidy. What was the use? said M. le curé. Why disturb her peace of mind? It could do no good and would only embitter her declining years. Far better that she should believe that the young Englishman had died many years ago, than to know he had developed into the smiling self-sufficient and perfidious man of the world known as Lord Camperdown. And the old lady night and morning sent up her little petition for the repose of the soul of Herbert Flower, cut off in the prime of his manhood. Perchance that simple prayer, breathed by those faithful lips and wafted to the throne of grace, may intercede for him on the day of reckoning, when wrongs will be righted and the full light of noon-day will shine on hidden things, and falsehood and deceit will be banished from this fair world for ever and ever.

The old light-house keeper had gone. The afternoon faded into twilight, twilight into night. The moon rose clear and full, and shone out in pale white splendor, illuminating the dim blue Laurentian hills across the great wide river. Pierre, after attending to the lights in the tower, arranged his nets on the beach and returned slowly to the lighthouse, thinking how strangely

all had come about, and after these long and weary years he was back to his beloved river, for which he had yearned with that overwhelming home-sickness characteristic of exiled Canadians. The past seemed like a hideous dream, bah ! he would not think of it. But try as he would, the memory of that ill-fated day, when he struck Jean Pinsonneault down, haunted him at all times. This memory always disturbed his peace ; one only had power to drive it away, even for a few short moments ; one only, hark ! that was her voice, what a clear sweet voice it was. He paused a moment to listen to the quaint words and old fashioned melody :

“ Par derrièr'chez mon père,
Vole, mon cœur vole,
Par derrièr'chez mon père,
Lui y a-t-un pon m'ier doux

.

Non ce n'est qu'une étoile
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Non ce n'est qu'une étoile
Qu' éclair nos amours.

Nos amants sont en guerre,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Nos amants sont en guerre,
Ils combattent pour nous.

—Qu'ils perdent ou qu'ils gagnent,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Qu'ils perdent ou qu'ils gagnent,
Ils les auront toujours.”

Julie's song came suddenly to an end as she lifted her head at his approach and exclaimed,

"Pierre, you have been thinking again. I can see it by your face. You have been brooding over what is long gone by. Pierre you must forget."

"Julie I cannot, not to-night. Do you not remember what anniversary this it?"

"Hush Pierre, you shall not recall it, M. le curé says you are too hard on yourself, you must forget. Oh! Pierre my beloved one, for my sake, forget. The good God has forgiven you, man has forgiven you. Why will you not forgive yourself?"

Several years have passed since that autumn evening when Pierre and Julie took up their abode at the lighthouse. In that remote district only a few changes have taken place. Pierre Grenier still retains his important post. Madame Lallieur has been gathered to her fathers, and sleeps amongst the quiet dead in Bic churchyard, where a rough wooden cross marks her last resting place. None would imagine that in this humble spot is buried the wife of the representative of the noble house of Camperdown, nor that by right this poor old woman should repose in their stately mausoleum, far away in the old world. Another strange life story is finished, another leaf from the book of fate turned over. And M. Gagnon is now old, very old, long past

the three score years and ten allotted to man for his work, but he is still hale and hearty, laboring amongst his poor, saying mass daily, and finding a vast amount of pride and pleasure in the new wing he has added to his little church. Old Wilson's hoarded money has been spent at last, and according to his dying wish. Still the old pirate's dwelling stands on the point, bleak and deserted, for none will approach it even in broad daylight. Fishermen coming home from their expeditions late at night, declare that they have seen ghostly forms come out of that door, and have beheld a gaunt old man, dragging after him a great oaken chest, and have heard weird ghostly voices shriek in mad expostulation on a stormy night, "Death! death! death! to him who touches the hidden treasure."

But on the Island at any rate, nothing comes to disturb the harmony, and with her steadfast love and devotion, Julie has guarded and watched over Pierre, who has well-nigh out-lived the horror of his unpremeditated deed and bitter imprisonment. He is a grey haired man, respected and honored throughout the country-side, and now no accusing tongue would dare to reproach him for the past. And the Island is no longer lonely, for the melody of little children's laughter and prattle resounds through its pinewoods and overhanging crags, and their gracious presence has

chased away the gloom, which of yore was wont to o'erwhelm him, and thus little by little, with the aid of the faithful Julie, and the omnipotent consoler—Father Time—there has come into the life of the Keeper of Big Lighthouse, that great and abounding peace which passeth understanding.

THE END.

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